COMMENTARY

PORTRAIT OF THE INAUTHENTIC JEW

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

IF IT is agreed that man may be defined as a being having freedom within the limits of a situation, then it is easy to see that the exercise of this freedom may be considered as *authentic* or *inauthentic* according to the choices made in the situation. Authenticity, it is almost needless to say, consists in having a true and lucid consciousness of the situation, in assuming the responsibilities and risks that it involves, in accepting it in pride or humiliation, sometimes in horror and hate.

There is no doubt that authenticity demands much courage and more than courage. Thus it is not surprising that one finds it so rarely. Most members of the middle class and most Christians are not authentic, in the sense that they refuse to live up to their middle-class or Christian condition fully and that they always conceal certain parts of themselves from themselves. When the Communists set down as part of their program "the radicalization of the masses," when Marx explains that the proletarian class *ought to be* conscious of itself, what does that mean if not that the worker, too, is not at first authentic?

And the Jew does not escape this rule: authenticity for him is to live to the full his condition as Jew; inauthenticity is to deny it or to attempt to escape from it. Inauthenticity is no doubt more tempting for him than for other men, because the situation which he has to lay claim to and to live in is quite simply that of a martyr. What the least favored of men ordinarily discover in their situation is a bond of concrete solidarity with other men. The economic condition of the salaried man living in the perspective of revolution, or the condition of the member of a persecuted church, involves in itself a profound unity of material and spiritual interests. But we have shown that the Jews have neither community of interests nor community of beliefs. They do not have the same fatherland; they have no history. The sole tie that binds them is the hostility and disdain of the societies which surround them. Thus the authentic Jew is the one who asserts his claim in the face of the disdain shown toward him.

The situation he wishes fully to understand and live out is, in time of social peace, almost incomprehensible: it is an atmosphere, a subtle sense of faces and of words, a menace that is concealed in things, an abstract bond that unites him to men who in all other respects are very different from

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"The Situation of the Jew," in last month's COMMENTARY, presented JEAN-PAUL SARTRE'S analysis of the social framework within which the Jew must live in Western society. In this second article, M. Sartre examines in greater detail the effect of this situation—in terms of that crucial choice between "authenticity" and "inauthenticity" which, in his view, faces every human being and takes a particular form for the Jew. In the third and last article in this series, to be published next month, M. Sartre deals with the moral implications of the Jewish question for all of Western society. These three articles comprise approximately three-quarters of the book *Réflexions sur la Question Juive*, published in Paris in 1946. The translation is by George J. Becker.

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him. Everything conspires actually to show him to his own eyes as a simple Frenchman. For the prosperity of his affairs depends closely upon that of his country, the fate of his sons is linked to peace, to the greatness of France, and the language he speaks and the culture that has been given him permit him to base his calculations and his reasoning on the principles common to the whole nation. He should therefore only have to let himself go in order to forget that he is a Jew, if he did not detect everywhere this almost undetectable poison—the hostile consciousness of others.

What is astonishing is certainly not that there are inauthentic Jews; it is rather that, in proportion, they are fewer than the inauthentic Christians. However, it is by taking advantage of certain aspects of the conduct of inauthentic Jews that the anti-Semite has forged his general mythology of the Jew. What characterizes the inauthentic Jews is that they deal with their situation by running away from it; they have chosen to deny it, or to deny their responsibilities, or to deny their isolation, which appears intolerable to them. That does not necessarily mean that they wish to destroy the concept of the Jew or that they explicitly deny the existence of a Jewish reality. But their gestures, sentiments and acts aim secretly at destroying this reality.

In a word, the inauthentic Jews are men whom other men take for Jews and who have decided to run away from this insupportable situation. The result is that they display various types of behavior not all of which are present at the same time in the same person but each of which may be characterized as an *avenue of flight.* The anti-Semite by collecting and assembling all these distinct and often incompatible avenues of flight has traced out a monstrous portrait which is supposed to be that of the Jew in general; at the same time he explains these free efforts at escape from a painful situation as hereditary traits, engraved on the very body of Israel and, consequently, incapable of modification.

If we wish to see the problem clearly, we must take this portrait apart, restore the autonomy of these "avenues of flight," and present them in their true character as ventures in behavior instead of innate qualities. It must be understood that the description of these avenues of flight is applied solely to the *inauthentic* Jew (the term "inauthentic" implying no moral blame, of course), and that it should be supplemented by a description of authentic Jewishness. Finally, we must grasp the idea that it is the *situation* of the Jew which must under all circumstances serve us as guiding thread. If we understand this method and if we apply it rigorously, perhaps we will be able to substitute for the great Manichean myth about Israel a few truths which, while more fragmentary, are more accurate.

WHAT is the first trait in the anti-Semitic mythology? It is, we are told, that the Jew is a complicated being who passes his time in self-analysis and subtle scheming. We are quick to call him a "splitter of hairs" without even asking ourselves whether this tendency to analysis and introspection is compatible with the sharpness in business and the blind aggressiveness that are also attributed to him. For my part, I recognize that the effort to escape produces in some Jews—for the most part intellectuals—an almost continuously reflective attitude. But again we must understand each other. This reflective behavior is not inherited. It is an avenue of flight, and it is we who force the Jew to flee.

Stekel, along with several other psychoanalysts, speaks of a "Jewish complex," and many are the Jews who mention their "inferiority complex." I see no harm in using this expression if we understand that this complex has not been received from the outside and that the Jew *creates this complex* when he chooses to live out his situation in an inauthentic manner. He has allowed himself to be persuaded by the anti-Semites; he is the first victim of their propaganda. He admits with them that, *if there is a Jew,* he must have the characteristics with which popular malevolence endows him, and his effort is to constitute himself a martyr, in the proper sense of the term, that is, to prove *in his person* that there are no Jews.

With him anxiety often takes a special form; it becomes a fear of acting or feeling like a Jew. We are familiar with those neurasthenics who are haunted by the fear of killing, of jumping out of a window, of uttering obscene words. Certain Jews are

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in some degree comparable to these people, though their anxiety rarely attains a pathological level. They have allowed themselves to be poisoned by the stereotype that others have of them, and they live in fear that their acts will correspond to this stereotype. Repeating a term used earlier, we may say that their conduct is perpetually overdetermined from the inside. Their acts have not only the motives which can be assigned to those of non-Jews—interest, passion, altruism, etc. —but they seek also to distinguish themselves radically from the acts catalogued as "Jewish." How many Jews are deliberately generous, disinterested, and even magnificent simply *because* the Jew is ordinarily taken to be a man of money? That in no way signifies that they have to struggle against "tendencies" to avarice—there is no reason, *a priori*, for Jews to be more avaricious than Christians—it means rather that their gestures of generosity are poisoned by the decision to be generous. Spontaneity and deliberate choice are here inextricably mixed. The end pursued is to obtain a certain result in the external world and at the same time to prove to oneself, to prove to others, that there is no such thing as Jewish nature.

Thus many inauthentic Jews play at not being Jews. Several Jews have reported to me their curious reaction after the armistice. We know that the role of the Jews in the Resistance was admirable; it was they who formed the principal cadres before the Communists went into action; for four years they gave proof of a courage and a spirit of decision which it is a pleasure to acknowledge. However, certain of them hesitated a great deal before "resisting," for the Resistance appeared to them so completely in line with Jewish interests that they were reluctant at first to engage in it; they wanted to make sure they were resisting not *as Jews* but *as Frenchmen*. This scrupulousness shows sufficiently the peculiar quality of their deliberations: the Jewish factor intervenes on every occasion and it is impossible for them to make a decision based merely on the pure and simple examination of the facts. In a word, they fall naturally into a state of reflective self-consciousness.

Like the timid person, like the scrupulous person, the Jew is not content to act or think; he sees himself act, he sees himself think. We must remark, however, that Jewish reflectiveness is in itself *practical*, since it does not originate in disinterested curiosity or in the desire for moral conversion. It is not the man but the *Jew* whom the Jews seek to know in themselves through introspection; and they wish to know him *in order to deny him*. With them it is not a question of recognizing certain faults and combating them, but of underlining by their conduct the fact that they do not have those faults. Thus we may explain that particular quality of Jewish irony which exercises itself most often at the expense of the Jew himself and which is a perpetual attempt to see himself from the outside. The Jew, because he knows he is under observation, takes the initiative and attempts to look at himself through the eyes of others. This objectivity toward himself is still another ruse of inauthenticity: while he contemplates himself with the "detachment" of another, he feels himself in effect *detached* from himself; he becomes another person, a pure witness.

However, he knows that this detachment from himself will be effective only if it is ratified by others. That is why one finds in him so often the faculty of assimilation. He absorbs all knowledge with an avidity which is not to be confused with disinterested curiosity. He hopes to become "a man," nothing but a man, a man like all other men, by taking in all the thoughts of man and acquiring a human point of view of the universe. He cultivates himself in order to destroy the Jew in himself, as if he wished to have applied to him—but in modified form—the phrase of Terence: *Nil humani alienum puto ergo homo sum* ("Nothing human is alien to me; therefore, I am a man").

At the same time he tries to lose himself in the crowd of Christians. We have seen that the latter have the art and the audacity to pretend before the Jew that they are not *another race*, but purely and simply *men*; if the Jew is fascinated by Christians it is not because of their virtues, which he values little, but because they represent anonymity, humanity without race. If he tries to penetrate the most exclusive circles, it is not because of that boundless ambition with which he is reproached so often—or, rather,

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that ambition has only one meaning: the Jew seeks to be recognized as a man by other men. If he wishes to slip in everywhere, it is because he cannot be at rest so long as there remains a single place which resists him and which, by resisting him, makes him a Jew in his own eyes. The principle behind this drive toward assimilation is an excellent one: the Jew is claiming his rights as a Frenchman. Unfortunately the realization of this enterprise rests on an inadequate foundation. He wants people to receive him as "a man," but even in the circles which he has been able to enter, he is received as a Jew. He is the rich or powerful Jew whom it is absolutely necessary to associate with, or the "good" Jew, the exceptional Jew, with whom one associates *in spite of* his race.

The Jew is not unaware of this, but if he admitted to himself that he was received as a Jew his enterprise would lose all meaning and he would become discouraged. He is therefore acting in bad faith: he is concealing the truth from himself, though he knows it in his heart. He conquers a position in his capacity as Jew; he keeps it with the means he has at his disposal, that is, with "Jewish" means, but he considers that each new conquest is a symbol of a higher step in the process of assimilation. It develops automatically that anti-Semitism, which is the almost immediate reaction of the circles he has penetrated, does not long permit him to remain unaware of what he would so much like to ignore. Yet the violence of the anti-Semite has the paradoxical effect of pushing the Jews to the conquest of other milieux and other groups. In short, his ambition is fundamentally a search for security, just as his snobbism—when he is a snob—is an effort to assimilate national values (pictures, books, etc.).

Thus he moves rapidly and brilliantly up through all social levels, but he remains like a hard kernel in the circles which accept him, and his assimilation is as ephemeral as it is brilliant. He is often reproached for this. According to a remark by André Siegfried, the Americans believe that their anti-Semitism originates in the fact that Jewish immigrants, in appearance the first to be assimilated, are still Jews in the second and third generations. This is naturally interpreted as meaning that the Jew does not sincerely desire to be assimilated and that, behind a feigned adaptability, there is concealed a deliberate and conscious attachment to the traditions of his race. The truth is exactly the contrary: it is because he is never accepted as *a* man, but always and everywhere as *the* Jew that the Jew is unassimilable.

From this situation there results a new paradox: that the inauthentic Jew wants to lose himself in the Christian world and yet he remains fixed in Jewish milieux. Wherever he introduces himself in order to get away from Jewish reality, he senses that he has been accepted as a Jew and is at every moment regarded as a Jew. His life among Christians does not bring him the anonymity he seeks; rather, it is a perpetual tension. In his flight toward mankind he takes with him everywhere the image which haunts him. That is what establishes among all Jews a solidarity which is not one of action or interest, but of situation. What unites them, even more than the sufferings of two thousand years, is the present hostility of Christians. Insist as they may that chance alone has grouped them in the same residential areas, in the same apartment houses, in the same enterprises, there is among them a strong and complex tie which is worth analysis.

In effect, the Jew is to another Jew the only man with whom he can say "we." What they have in common (at least all the inauthentic Jews) is the constant temptation to consider that they "are not like other men," their susceptibility to the opinions of others, and their blind and desperate decision to run away from that temptation. When, therefore, they are by themselves in the intimacy of their apartments, by eliminating the non-Jewish witness they eliminate Jewish reality at the same time. No doubt those Christians who have penetrated these interiors find their inhabitants more Jewish than ever, but that is because they have allowed themselves to relax—which does not mean that they abandon themselves to the enjoyment of their Jewish "nature," as they are often accused of doing, but, on the contrary, that they forget it. What would prove this—if that were necessary—is that very often members of the same family do not perceive the ethnic characteristics of their

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relatives (by ethnic characteristics I mean here the biological and hereditary facts which we have accepted as incontestable). I knew a Jewish woman whose son had to make some business trips into Nazi Germany around 1934. This son had the typical characteristics of the French Jew—a hooked nose, protruding ears, etc.—but when we expressed anxiety about what might happen to him during one of his absences, his mother replied: "Oh, I am not worried; he doesn't look like a Jew at all."

Only, by a dialectic proper to the inauthentic Jew, this recourse to interiority, this effort to constitute a Jewish immanence by which each Jew instead of being the witness of others is merged in a collective subjectivity and the Christian is eliminated as an onlooker, this and all such ruses of flight are reduced to nothing by the universal and constant presence of the non-Jew. Even in their most intimate gatherings the Jews could say of the non-Jew what St. John Perse said of the sun: "He is not named but his presence is among us." They cannot ignore the fact that their very propensity to associate together defines them as Jews in the minds of the Christians. And when they emerge in public, their solidarity with their coreligionists marks them as if with a brand. The Jew who encounters another Jew in the drawing room of a Christian is a little like a Frenchman who meets a compatriot abroad. Yet the Frenchman derives pleasure from asserting to the world that he is a Frenchman, whereas the Jew, even if he were the only Israelite in a non-Jewish company, would force himself not to feel that he was a Jew. When there is another Jew with him, he feels himself endangered before the others, and he who a moment before could not even see the ethnic characteristics of his son or his nephew now looks at his coreligionist with the eyes of an anti-Semite, spying out with a mixture of fear and fatalism the objective signs of their common origin.

He is so afraid of the discoveries the Christians are going to make that he hastens to give them warning, he becomes himself an anti-Semite by impatience and for the sake of the others. Each Jewish trait he detects is like a dagger thrust, for it seems to him that he finds it in himself, but out of reach, objective, incurable, and published to the world. It does not greatly matter who *manifests* the Jewish race. The moment it is manifested, all the efforts of the Jew to deny it are in vain.

We know that the enemies of Israel are ready to support their own opinion with the statement that "there is no one more anti-Semitic than the Jew." In actual fact, this anti-Semitism of the Jew is borrowed. It is first of all the painful obsession of finding in his parents, in those near him, the defects which he wishes to reject with all his strength. Stekel, in the case mentioned earlier, reports the following: "In the household and in the education of the children everything must be under the direction [of the Jewish husband]. It is even worse in society. He pursues [the wife] with his eyes and criticizes her to such a degree that she loses countenance. As a young girl, she was proud; everybody admired her distinguished and assured manner. Now she trembles all the time for fear of making a mistake; she fears the criticism that she reads in the eyes of her husband. . . . *At the least mishap, he might reproach her with acting Jewish.*"

One can well imagine this drama between two persons: the husband—critical, almost pedantic, constantly reflective—reproaching his wife for being Jewish because he is frightened to death of appearing that way himself; the woman, crushed by his hostile and pitiless look, feeling that she is mired down in "Jewishness" in spite of herself, feeling, without understanding why, that her every gesture, her every phrase, is off key, and may reveal her origin to all eyes. It is hell for both of them. But we must see, too, that this anti-Semitism of the Jew is an effort to make himself an objective witness and judge, and thus escape liability for the faults ascribed to his "race."

In the same way, there are many who apply a lucid and pitiless severity even to themselves, because this severity produces a doubling of personality by which they escape a sense of guilt through becoming *judges*. The manifest presence in another of that "Jewish reality" which he refuses to admit in himself helps to create in the inauthentic Jew a mystical and prelogical feeling of his kinship with other Jews. This sentiment is on the whole a recognition of

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participation—the Jews "participate" in each other; the life of each is haunted by the lives of others—and this mystical communion becomes all the stronger the more the inauthentic Jew seeks to deny that he is a Jew.

I shall give but one example in support of this statement. We know that prostitutes abroad are frequently French, and it is never pleasant for a Frenchman to encounter a Frenchwoman in a brothel in Germany or in Argentina. However, the Frenchman's sense of his participation in the national reality is of quite different nature from the Jew's sense of participation in his people. France is a *nation*; the patriot can thus consider himself as belonging to a collective reality whose form is expressed by its economic, cultural, and military activity; and if certain secondary aspects are displeasing, he is able to overlook them. That is not the reaction of a Jew who meets a Jewess under similar conditions. In spite of himself, he sees in the humiliating situation of a prostitute the humiliating situation of Israel. I have heard several anecdotes on this subject, but I shall cite only one of them, which I have heard directly from the person to whom it happened. A Jew goes to a house of prostitution, chooses one of the women, and goes upstairs with her. She tells him she is a Jew. He finds himself impotent, and very soon is overcome with an intolerable sense of humiliation that expresses itself in spasms of vomiting. It is not that sexual intercourse with a Jewess is repugnant to him—after all, Jews marry each other; it is rather the sense that he is contributing personally to the humiliation of the Jewish race in the person of the prostitute and, consequently, in his own person. In the last analysis it is *he* who is prostituted, humiliated; it is he and the whole Jewish people.

Thus, no matter what he may do, the inauthentic Jew is possessed by the consciousness of being a Jew. At that very moment when he is forcing himself by his whole conduct to deny the traits ascribed to him, he feels that he can see these traits in others, and thus they return to him indirectly. He seeks and flees his coreligionists; he affirms that he is only one man among others, and like others, yet he feels himself compromised by the demeanor of the first passer-by, if that passer-by is a Jew. He makes himself an anti-Semite in order to break all his ties with the Jewish community; yet he finds that community again in the depths of his heart, for he experiences in his very flesh the humiliations that the anti-Semites impose upon other Jews. What stamps the inauthentic Jew is precisely this perpetual oscillation between pride and a sense of inferiority, between the voluntary and passionate negation of the traits of his race and the mystic and carnal participation in the Jewish reality.

This painful and ineluctable situation may lead a certain number of them to masochism, for masochism seems to offer a temporary solution, a sort of respite or repose. What obsesses the Jew is that he is responsible for himself, like all men, that he does freely what he considers it good to do, and that, nevertheless, a hostile society always sees his acts stained with the Jewish character. Thus it seems to him that he makes himself a Jew at the very moment he forces himself to flee the Jewish reality; that he is engaged in a struggle in which he is always vanquished and in which he becomes his own enemy; and to the degree that he is conscious of being responsible for himself, it seems to him that he has the crushing responsibility of making himself a Jew before other Jews and before Christians. Through him, in spite of him, the Jewish reality exists.

Now, masochism is the desire to have oneself treated as an object. Humiliated, despised, or simply neglected, the masochist has the joy of seeing himself moved, handled, utilized like a thing. He tries to think of himself as an inanimate thing, and thereby to abdicate his responsibilities. This complete abdication attracts certain Jews, weary of the struggle against their impalpable Jewishness, always disowned and tormented yet always renascent. They fail to see that authenticity manifests itself in revolt, and is not to be achieved merely by the admission that they are Jews; they seek only to be made Jews by the looks, the violence, the disdain of others, by having qualities and a fate *attached* to them—to be Jews as a stone is a stone: thus for a moment they can find relief from that bewitched freedom which does not permit them to escape from their condition, and which seems to exist only in order to impose upon them a responsibility

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for what they reject with all their strength.

To be sure, one must recognize that this masochism has other causes as well. In an admirable and cruel passage of *Antigone*, Sophocles writes: "You have too much pride for a person sunk in misfortune." It might be said that one of the essential traits of the Jew is that, in contrast to Antigone, an everyday acquaintance with misfortune makes him modest in catastrophe. It is not to be concluded from this, as is often done, that he is arrogant when he succeeds and abject when he fails. It is quite another matter: he has assimilated the curious advice which Greek wisdom gave to the daughter of Oedipus; he has learned that modesty, silence, patience are proper to misfortune, because misfortune is already a sin in the eyes of men. And certainly such wisdom can turn into masochism, into a taste for suffering. But the essential thing is still the temptation to be divested of oneself, and to be marked finally and forever with the nature and the destiny of a Jew, relieved of all responsibility and need to struggle.

Thus the anti-Semitism and the masochism of the inauthentic Jew represent in a sense the two extremes of his possible behavior: in anti-Semitism he denies his race in order to be no more than a pure individual, a man without blemish in the midst of other men; in masochism, he repudiates his liberty as a man in order to escape the sin of being a Jew and in order to seek the repose and passivity of a thing.

But the anti-Semite adds a new touch to the portrait: the Jew, he tells us, is an abstract intellectual, a pure reasoner. And we perceive at once that the terms *abstract, rationalist, intellectual* here take on a pejorative sense; it could not be otherwise, since the anti-Semite lays claim to a concrete and irrational possession of the values of the nation.

But if we recall that rationalism was one of the principal instruments of human liberation, we must refuse to consider it a pure play of abstractions; on the contrary, we must insist on its creative power. In rationalism two centuries—and not the least important—placed all their hope; from rationalism sprang the sciences and their practical application; it was an ideal and a passion; it tried to bring men together by uncovering for them universal truths on which they could all reach agreement, and in its naive and agreeable optimism it deliberately confounded evil with error. We shall understand nothing about Jewish rationalism if we see it as some kind of abstract taste for disputation, instead of what it is—a youthful and lively love of men.

At the same time, however, it is also an avenue of flight—I may even say, the royal road of flight. Up to this point, we have discussed those Jews who attempt, in their individual personalities, to deny their situation as Jews. But there are others who have chosen to espouse a conception of the world that excludes the very idea of race. No doubt this is really an attempt to conceal from themselves their own situation as Jews; but if they could succeed in persuading themselves and others that the very idea of Jews is contradictory, if they could succeed in establishing their vision of the world in such fashion that they became blind to the reality of Jewishness just as the Daltonian is blind to red or green, could they not then declare in good faith that they are "men among men"?

The rationalism of Jews is a passion—the passion for the universal. If they have chosen this rather than something else, it is in order to fight the particularist conceptions that set them apart. Of all things in the world, reason is the most widely shared; it belongs to everybody and to nobody; it is the same to all. If reason exists, then there is no French truth or German truth; there is no Negro truth or Jewish truth. There is only one Truth, and he is best who wins it. In the face of universal and eternal laws, man himself is universal. There are no more Jews or Poles; there are men who live in Poland, others who are designated as "of Jewish faith" on their family papers, and agreement is always possible among them as soon as discussion bears on the universal.

Recall the portrait of the philosopher that Plato sketches in the *Phaedo*: how the awakening to reason is for him death to the body, to particularities of character; how the disembodied philosopher, pure lover of abstract and universal truth, loses all his individual traits in order to become a universal look of inquiry. It is precisely this sort of disincarnation that certain Jews seek. The best way to feel oneself no longer a Jew is

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to reason, for reasoning is valid for all and can be retraced by all. There is not a Jewish way of mathematics; the Jewish mathematician becomes a universal man when he reasons. And the anti-Semite who follows his reasoning becomes his brother, despite his own resistance.

Thus the rationalism to which the Jew adheres so passionately is first of all an exercise of asceticism and of purification, an escape into the universal. The young Jew who feels a taste for brilliant and abstract argument is like the infant who touches his body in order to become acquainted with it: he experiments with and inspects his intoxicating condition as universal man; on a superior level he realizes that accord and assimilation which is denied him on the social level. The choice of rationalism is for him the choice of a human destiny and a human nature. That is why it is at once both true and false that the Jew is "more intelligent than the Christian." We should say rather that he has a taste for pure intelligence, that he loves to exercise it with reference to anything and everything, that the use he makes of it is not thwarted by the innumerable taboos which still affect the Christian, or by a certain type of particularist sensibility which the non-Jew cultivates willingly. And we should add that there is in the Jew a sort of impassioned imperialism of reason: for he wishes not only to convince others that he is right; his goal is to persuade them that there is an absolute and unconditioned value to rationalism. He feels himself to be a missionary of the universal; against the universalism of the Catholic religion, from which he is excluded, he asserts the "catholicity" of the rational, an instrument by which to attain to the truth and establish a spiritual bond among men. It is not by chance that Léon Brunschvicg, a Jewish philosopher, brings together in his writings the progress of reason and the progress of *unification* (unification of ideas, unification of men).

THE anti-Semite reproaches the Jew with "not being creative," with having "a destructive intelligence." This absurd accusation (Spinoza, Proust, Kafka, Darius Milhaud, Chagall, Einstein, Bergson—are they not Jews?) has been given a semblance of truth by the fact that the Jewish intelligence willingly takes a critical turn. But here again it is not a question of the disposition of cerebral cells but of a choice of weapons. In effect, the Jew finds arrayed against him the irrational powers of tradition, of race, of national destiny, of instinct: it is pretended that these powers have built monuments, a culture, a history—practical values that retain much of the irrationality of their origins and are accessible only to intuition. The defense of the Israelite is to deny intuition as well as the irrational, to make the obscure powers vanish—magic, unreason, everything that cannot be explained on the basis of universal principles, everything that betrays a tendency to the singular and the exceptional. He is distrustful on principle of those totalities which the Christian mind from time to time produces: he *challenges*.

No doubt in this connection one can speak of destruction, but what the Jew wishes to destroy is strictly localized; it is the ensemble of irrational values that present themselves to immediate cognition without proof. The Jew demands proof for everything that his adversary advances, because thus he proves himself. He distrusts intuition because *it is not open to discussion* and because, in consequence, it ends by separating men. If he reasons and disputes with his adversary, it is to establish the unity of intelligence. Before any debate he wishes agreement on the principles with which the disputants start; by means of this preliminary agreement he offers to construct a human order based on the universality of human nature. The perpetual criticism with which he is reproached conceals a naive love for a communion in reason with his adversaries, and the still more naive belief that violence is in no way necessary in human relations. Where the anti-Semite, the fascist, etc., starting out with intuitions that are incommunicable and that he wishes to be incommunicable, must use force in order to impose the illuminations he cannot impart, the inauthentic Jew seeks to dissolve by critical analysis all that may separate men and lead them to violence, since it is he who will be the first victim of that violence.

I am aware that Spinoza, Husserl, and Bergson have made place for intuition in their systems. But the intuition of Spinoza and Husserl is *rational*, which means that it is based on reason, is guaranteed by criti-

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cism, and has universal truth as its object. It has no resemblance to the Pascalian subtlety of spirit, and it is this latter—unanswerable, emotional, based on a thousand imperceptible perceptions—which to the Jew seems his worst enemy. As for Bergson, his philosophy offers the curious appearance of an anti-intellectualist doctrine constructed entirely by the most rational and most critical of intelligences. It is through argument that he establishes the existence of pure duration, of philosophic intuition; and that very intuition which discovers duration or life, is itself universal, since anyone may practice it, and it leads toward the universal, since its objects can be named and conceived. I realize that Bergson has his hesitations about using language, but in the end he permits words to serve as guides, as indicators, as half-faithful messengers. Who would ask more of them? And notice how completely at ease he is in argument. Read again the first chapter of the essay on immediate sense data, the classical criticism of psycho-physiological parallelism, the criticism of Broca's theory of aphasia.

In fact, just as it was possible to say with Poincaré that non-Euclidean geometry is a matter of definition and comes into being as soon as it is decided to call a certain type of curve straight—for example, the circumferences that may be traced on the surface of a sphere—so the philosophy of Bergson is a rationalism which exercises the privilege of a special language. Bergson has chosen, in effect, to apply the terms "life," "pure duration," etc., to what earlier philosophers had called "matter," and the comprehension of this matter he has called "intuition." Since that comprehension must be prepared for by research and criticism, since it takes hold of a universal and not of incommunicable particularities, it amounts to the same thing whether we call it irrational intuition or a synthetic function of reason. If—quite properly—we characterize the philosophy of Kierkegaard or of Novalis as irrationalism, then perhaps Bergson's system is a rationalism that has undergone a change of name.

For my part, I see it as the supreme defense of the persecuted: to attack in order to defend oneself, to conquer the irrationalism of the adversary on its own ground—that is, to render it harmless and assimilate it to constructive reason. And, as a matter of fact, where the irrationalism of a Sorel leads straight to violence, and, in consequence, to anti-Semitism, the irrationalism of Bergson is perfectly harmless and can serve only a universal reconciliation.

THIS universalism, this critical rationalism, is what one normally finds in the democrat. In his abstract liberalism, he affirms that Jews, Chinese, Negroes ought to have the same rights as other members of society, but he demands these rights for them as men, not as concrete and individual products of history. Thus certain Jews look at their own personalities with the eyes of the democrat. Haunted by the specter of violence, by the unassimilated residues of particularist and warrior societies, they dream of a contractual community in which thought itself would be established under form of contract—since it would be a dialogue in which the disputants would agree on principles at the start—and in which the "social contract" would be the sole collective bond. The Jews are the mildest of men, passionately hostile to violence. That obstinate sweetness which they conserve in the midst of the most atrocious persecution, that sense of justice and of reason which they put up as their sole defense against a hostile, brutal, and unjust society, is perhaps the best part of the message they bring to us and the true mark of their greatness.

But the anti-Semite at once seizes on this free effort of the Jew to live in and master his situation; he makes it into a fixed characteristic manifesting the Jew's incapacity to become assimilated. For him, the Jew is no longer a rationalist but a reasoner; his quest is not a positive search for the universal, but proof of his incapacity to take hold of vital racial and national values; the spirit of free criticism on which he bases his hope of defending himself against superstition and myth becomes the satanic spirit of negation, a virus of destruction. Instead of appreciating this spirit as an instrument of self-criticism originating spontaneously in modern society, the anti-Semite sees it as a permanent threat to national ties and French values.

Rather than deny the love of certain Jews for the exercise of reason, it has seemed to me more true and more useful to attempt to explain it.

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TO SAVE THE JEWISH HOMELAND

There Is Still Time

HANNAH ARENDT

WHEN, on November 29, 1947, the partition of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state were accepted by the United Nations, it was assumed that no outside force would be necessary to implement this decision.

It took the Arabs less than two months to destroy this illusion and it took the United States less than three months to reverse its stand on partition, withdraw its support in the United Nations, and propose a trusteeship for Palestine. Of all the member states of the United Nations, only Soviet Russia and her satellites made it unequivocally clear that they still favored partition and the immediate proclamation of a Jewish state.

Trusteeship was at once rejected by both the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee. The Jews claimed the moral right to adhere to the original United Nations decision; the Arabs claimed an equally moral right to adhere to the League of Nations principle of self-determination, according to which Palestine would be ruled by its present Arab majority and the Jews be granted minority rights. The Jewish Agency, on its part, announced the proclamation of a Jewish state for May 16, regardless of any United Nations decision. It remains a fact, meanwhile, that trusteeship, like partition, would have to be enforced by an outside power.

A last-minute appeal for a truce, made to both parties under the auspices of the United States, broke down in two days. Upon this appeal had rested the last chance of avoiding foreign intervention, at least temporarily. As matters stand at this moment, not a single possible solution or proposition affecting the Palestinian conflict is in sight that could be realized without enforcement by external authority.

The past few weeks of guerrilla warfare should have shown both Arabs and Jews how costly and destructive the war upon which they have embarked promises to be. In recent days, the Jews have won a few initial successes that prove their relative superiority over present Arab forces in Palestine. The Arabs, however, instead of concluding at least local truce agreements, have decided to evacuate whole cities and towns rather than stay in Jewish-dominated territory. This be-

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LESS than six months after the Assembly's recommendation looking to the declaration of a Jewish state in Palestine on May 15, the Jewish homeland stands at the brink of large-scale war, with the leadership of the Yishuv pledged to the perspective of an armed struggle to the death, at the cost of every man and every settlement, if need be. Is there no other alternative? In this article, latest in a series which has discussed the problems and prospects of the Jewish state from diverse points of view, HANNAH ARENDT, Zionist of many years standing, reviews the steps that have brought the Jewish homeland to its present plight and tries to trace out a path that to her mind can save the great human assets and achievements of the Yishuv. Dr. Arendt's writings on politics and history have won her an increasing American audience. Readers of COMMENTARY may remember in particular her article "The Jewish State: Fifty Years After" (May 1946), a searching and prophetic analysis of the ideas of Theodore Herzl. Dr. Arendt studied philosophy at Heidelberg under Karl Jaspers, wrote for German magazines before her emigration to France in 1933, and came to the United States in 1941. In 1935, as executive secretary of Youth Aliya, she brought a party of children from France to settle in Palestine, and she has an intimate knowledge of the country. She is at present completing a volume on imperialism, which Houghton, Mifflin will bring out next year.

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havior declares more effectively than all proclamations the Arab refusal of any compromise; it is obvious that they have decided to expend in time and numbers whatever it may take to win a decisive victory. The Jews, on the other hand, living on a small island in an Arab sea, might well be expected to jump at the chance to exploit their present advantage by offering a negotiated peace. Their military situation is such that time and numbers necessarily work against them. If one takes into account the objective vital interests of the Arab and the Jewish peoples, especially in terms of the present situation and future well-being of the Near East—where a full-fledged war will inevitably invite all kinds of international interventions—the present desire of both peoples to fight it out at any price is nothing less than sheer irrationality.

One of the reasons for this unnatural and, as far as the Jewish people are concerned, tragic development is a decisive change in Jewish public opinion that has accompanied the confusing political decisions of the great powers.

The fact is that Zionism has won its most significant victory among the Jewish people at the very moment when its achievements in Palestine are in gravest danger. This may not seem extraordinary to those who have always believed that the building of a Jewish homeland was the most important—perhaps the only real—achievement of Jews in our century, and that ultimately no individual who wanted to stay a Jew could remain aloof from events in Palestine. Nevertheless, Zionism had in actuality always been a partisan and controversial issue; the Jewish Agency, though claiming to speak for the Jewish people as a whole, was still well aware that it represented only a fraction of them. This situation has changed overnight. With the exception of a few anti-Zionist diehards, whom nobody can take very seriously, there is now no organization and almost no individual Jew that doesn't privately or publicly support partition and the establishment of a Jewish state.

Jewish left-wing intellectuals who a relatively short time ago still looked down upon Zionism as an ideology for the feeble-minded, and viewed the building of a Jewish homeland as a hopeless enterprise that they, in their great wisdom, had rejected before it was ever started; Jewish businessmen whose interest in Jewish politics had always been determined by the all-important question of how to keep Jews out of newspaper headlines; Jewish philanthropists who had resented Palestine as a terribly expensive charity, draining off funds from other "more worthy" purposes; the readers of the Yiddish press, who for decades had been sincerely, if naively, convinced that America was the promised land—all these, from the Bronx to Park Avenue down to Greenwich Village and over to Brooklyn are united today in the firm conviction that a Jewish state is needed, that America has betrayed the Jewish people, that the reign of terror by the Irgun and the Stern groups is more or less justified, and that Rabbi Silver, David Ben Gurion, and Moshe Shertok are the real, if somewhat too moderate, statesmen of the Jewish people.

Something very similar to this growing unanimity among American Jews has arisen in Palestine itself. Just as Zionism had been a partisan issue among American Jews, so the Arab question and the state issue had been controversial issues within the Zionist movement and in Palestine. Political opinion was sharply divided there between the chauvinism of the Revisionists, the middle-of-the-road nationalism of the majority party, and the vehemently anti-nationalist, anti-state sentiments of a large part of the kibbutz movement, particularly the Hashomer Hatzair. Very little is now left of these differences of opinion.

The Hashomer Hatzair has formed one party with the Ahdut Avodah, sacrificing its age-old bi-national program to the "accomplished fact" of the United Nations decision—a body, by the way, for which they never had too much respect when it was still called the League of Nations. The small Aliya Hadasha, mostly composed of recent immigrants from Central Europe, still retains

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some of its old moderation and its sympathies for England, and it would certainly prefer Weizmann to Ben Gurion—but since Weizmann and most of its members have always been committed to partition, and, like everybody else, to the Biltmore Program, this opposition does not amount to much more than a difference over personalities.

The general mood of the country, moreover, has been such that terrorism and the growth of totalitarian methods are silently tolerated and secretly applauded; and the general, underlying public opinion with which anybody desiring to appeal to the Yishuv has to reckon shows no notable divisions at all.

Even more surprising than the growing unanimity of opinion among Palestinian Jews on one hand and American Jews on the other, is the fact that they are essentially in agreement on the following more or less roughly stated propositions: the moment has now come to get everything or nothing, victory or death; Arab and Jewish claims are irreconcilable and only a military decision can settle the issue; the Arabs, all Arabs, are our enemies and we accept this fact; only outmoded liberals believe in compromises, only philistines believe in justice, and only *shlemiels* prefer truth and negotiation to propaganda and machine guns; Jewish experience in the last decades—or over the last centuries, or over the last two thousand years—has finally awakened us and taught us to look out for ourselves; this alone is reality, everything else is stupid sentimentality; everybody is against us, Great Britain is anti-Semitic, the United States is imperialist—but Russia might be our ally for a certain period because her interests happen to coincide with ours; yet in the final analysis we count upon nobody except ourselves; in sum—we are ready to go down fighting, and we will consider anybody who stands in our way a traitor and anything done to hinder us a stab in the back.

IT WOULD be frivolous to deny the intimate connection between this mood on the part of Jews everywhere and the recent European catastrophe, with the subsequent fantastic injustice and callousness toward the surviving remnant that were thereby so ruthlessly transformed into displaced persons. The result has been an amazing and rapid change in what we call national character. After two thousand years of "Galut mentality," the Jewish people have suddenly ceased to believe in survival as an ultimate good in itself and have gone over in a few years to the opposite extreme. Now Jews believe in fighting at any price and feel that "going down" is a sensible method of politics.

Unanimity of opinion is a very ominous phenomenon, and one characteristic of our modern mass age. It destroys social and personal life, which is based on the fact that we are different by nature and by conviction. To hold different opinions and to be aware that other people think differently on the same issue shields us from that god-like certainty which stops all discussion and reduces social relationships to those of an ant heap. A unanimous public opinion tends to eliminate bodily those who differ, for mass unanimity is not the result of agreement, but an expression of fanaticism and hysteria. In contrast to agreement, unanimity does not stop at certain well-defined objects, but spreads like an infection into every related issue.

THUS Jewish unanimity on the Palestine issue has already prompted a somewhat vague and inarticulate shift of Jewish public opinion in the direction of pro-Soviet sympathies, a shift that even affects people who for more than twenty-five years have consistently denounced Bolshevik policies. Even more significant than such changes of mood and general attitude have been the attempts to establish an anti-Western and pro-Soviet orientation inside the Zionist movement. The resignation of Moshe Sneh, the organizer of illegal immigration and formerly prominent in the Haganah, is important in this respect; and occasional utterances by almost every one of the Palestinian delegates in America point even more strongly in this

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direction. The program, finally, of the new left-wing Palestinian party formed by the merger of the Hashomer Hatzair and the Ahdut Avodah has put plainly on record as its chief reason for not joining the majority party the desire to have Zionist foreign policy rely on Russia more than on the Western democracies.

The mentality behind this unrealistic understanding of Russian policy and the consequences of subjecting oneself to it has a long tradition in Zionism. As is understandable enough among people without political experience, a childlike hope has always been present that some big brother would come along to befriend the Jewish people, solve their problems, protect them from the Arabs, and present them eventually with a beautiful Jewish state with all the trimmings. This role was filled in Jewish imagination by Great Britain—until the issuance of the White Paper; and because of this naive trust, and an equally naive underestimation of Arab forces, for decades Jewish leaders let slip one opportunity after another to come to an understanding with the Arabs. After the outbreak of the Second World War, and particularly since the Biltmore Program, the imaginary role of the big brother of the Jews fell to the United States. But it has very quickly become clear that America is no more in a position to fill the bill than the British, and so Soviet Russia is now left as the only power upon which foolish hopes can be pinned. It is remarkable, however, that Russia is the first big brother whom even Jews do not quite trust. For the first time a note of cynicism has entered Jewish hopes.

Unfortunately, this healthy distrust is not caused so much by a specific suspicion of Soviet policy as by another traditionally Zionist feeling that has by now seized all sections of the Jewish people: the cynical and deep-rooted conviction that all Gentiles are anti-Semitic, and everybody and everything is against the Jews, that, in the words of Herzl, the world can be divided into *verschämte und unverschämte Antisemiten,* and that the "essential meaning of Zionism is the revolt of the Jews against their pointless and hapless mission—which has been to challenge the Gentiles to be crueller than they dare without forcing them to be as kind as they ought, [with the result that the Zionist revolt has ended in reproducing] in altered perspective the dynamic picture of Israel's mission" (Benjamin Halpern in the *New Leader,* December 1947). In other words, general Gentile hostility, a phenomenon that Herzl thought was directed only at Galut Jewry, and which would therefore disappear with the normalization of the Jewish people in Palestine, is now assumed by Zionists to be an unalterable, eternal fact of Jewish history that repeats itself under any circumstances, even in Palestine.

Obviously this attitude is plain racist chauvinism and it is equally obvious that this division between Jews and all other peoples—who are to be classed as enemies—does not differ from other master race theories (even though the Jewish "master race" is pledged not to conquest but to suicide by its protagonists). It is also plain that any interpretation of politics oriented according to such "principles" is hopelessly out of touch with the realities of this world. Nevertheless it is a fact that such attitudes tacitly or explicitly permeate the general atmosphere of Jewry; and therefore Jewish leaders can threaten mass suicide to the applause of their audiences, and the terrible and irresponsible "or else we shall go down" creeps into all official Jewish statements, however radical or moderate their sources.

EVERY believer in a democratic government knows the importance of a loyal opposition. The tragedy of Jewish politics at this moment is that it is wholly determined by the Jewish Agency and that no opposition to it of any significance exists either in Palestine or America.

From the time of the Balfour Declaration the loyal opposition in Zionist politics was constituted by the non-Zionists (certainly this was the case after 1929, when the enlarged Jewish Agency elected half of the Executive from the non-Zionists). But for all practical purposes the non-Zionist oppo-

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sition no longer exists today. This unfortunate development was encouraged, if not caused, by the fact that the United States and the United Nations finally endorsed an extremist Jewish demand that non-Zionists had always held to be totally unrealistic. With the support of a Jewish state by the great powers, the non-Zionists believed themselves refuted by reality itself. Their sudden loss of significance, and their helplessness in the face of what they felt justified in thinking an accomplished fact, were the result of an attitude that has always identified reality with the sum of those facts created by the powers-that-be—and by them only. They had believed in the Balfour Declaration rather than in the wish of the Jewish people to build its homeland; they had reckoned with the British or American governments rather than with the people living in the Near East. They had refused to go along with the Biltmore program—but they accepted it once it was recognized by the United States and the United Nations.

Now, if the non-Zionists had wanted to act as genuine realists in Jewish politics, they should have insisted and continued to insist that the only permanent reality in the whole constellation was the presence of Arabs in Palestine, a reality no decision could alter—except, perhaps, the decision of a totalitarian state, implemented by its particular brand of ruthless force. Instead, they mistook decisions of great powers for the ultimate realities and lacked the courage to warn, not only their fellow-Jews, but also their respective governments of the possible consequences of partition and the declaration of a Jewish state. It was ominous enough that no significant Zionist party was left to oppose the decision of November 29, the majority being committed to the Jewish state, and the others (the minority under Weizmann) to partition; but it was downright tragic that at this most crucial of all moments the loyal opposition of the non-Zionists simply disappeared.

IN THE face of the "despair and resoluteness" of the Yishuv (as a Palestinian delegate recently put it) and the suicide threats of the Jewish leaders, it might be useful to remind the Jews and the world what it is that will "go down" if the final tragedy should come in Palestine.

Palestine and the building of a Jewish homeland constitute today the great hope and the great pride of Jews all over the world. What would happen to Jews, individually and collectively, if this hope and this pride were to be extinguished in another catastrophe is almost beyond imagining. But it is certain that this would become the central fact of Jewish history and it is possible that it might become the beginning of the self-dissolution of the Jewish people. There is no Jew in the world whose whole outlook on life and the world would not be radically changed by such a tragedy.

If the Yishuv went down, it would drag along in its fall the collective settlements, the kibbutzim—which constitute perhaps the most promising of all social experiments made in the 20th century, as well as the most magnificent part of the Jewish homeland.

Here, in complete freedom and unhampered by any government, a new form of ownership, a new type of farmer, a new way of family life and child education, and new approaches to the troublesome conflicts between city and country, between rural and industrial labor have been created.

The people of the kibbutzim have been too absorbed in their quiet and effective revolution to make their voices sufficiently heard in Zionist politics. If it is true that the members of the Irgun and the Stern group are not recruited from the kibbutzim, it is also true that the kibbutzim have offered no serious obstacle to terrorism.

It is this very abstention from politics, this enthusiastic concentration on immediate problems, that has enabled the kibbutz pioneers to go ahead with their work, undisturbed by the more noxious ideologies of our times, realizing new laws and new behavior patterns, establishing new customs and new values, and translating and integrating them in new institutions. The loss of the kibbutzim, the ruin of the new type

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of man they have produced, the destruction of their institutions and the oblivion that would swallow the fruit of their experiences —this would be one of the severest of blows to the hopes of all those, Jewish and non-Jewish, who have not and never will make their peace with present-day society and its standards. For this Jewish experiment in Palestine holds out hope of solutions that will be acceptable and applicable, not only in individual cases, but also for the large mass of men everywhere whose dignity and very humanity are in our time so seriously threatened by the pressures of modern life and its unsolved problems.

STILL another precedent, or at least its possibility, would go down with the Yishuv —that of close cooperation between two peoples, one embodying the most advanced ways of European civilization, the other an erstwhile victim of colonial oppression and backwardness. The idea of Arab-Jewish cooperation, though never realized on any scale and today seemingly farther off than ever, is not an idealistic day dream but a sober statement of the fact that without it the whole Jewish venture in Palestine is doomed. Jews and Arabs could be forced by circumstances to show the world that there are no differences between two people that cannot be bridged. Indeed, the working out of such a *modus vivendi* might in the end serve as a model of how to counteract the dangerous tendencies of formerly oppressed peoples to shut themselves off from the rest of the world and develop nationalist superiority complexes of their own.

Many opportunities for Jewish-Arab friendship have already been lost, but none of these failures can alter the basic fact that the existence of the Jews in Palestine depends on achieving it. Moreover, the Jews have one advantage in the fact that, excluded as they were from official history for centuries, they have no imperialist past to live down. They can still act as a vanguard in international relations on a small but valid scale—as in the kibbutzim they have already acted as a vanguard in social relations despite the relatively insignificant numbers of the people involved.

THERE is very little doubt about the final outcome of an all-out war between Arabs and Jews. One can win many battles without winning a war. And up to now, no real battle has yet taken place in Palestine.

And even if the Jews were to win the war, its end would find the unique possibilities and the unique achievements of Zionism in Palestine destroyed. The land that would come into being would be something quite other than the dream of world Jewry, Zionist and non-Zionist. The "victorious" Jews would live surrounded by an entirely hostile Arab population, secluded inside ever-threatened borders, absorbed with physical self-defense to a degree that would submerge all other interests and activities. The growth of a Jewish culture would cease to be the concern of the whole people; social experiments would have to be discarded as impractical luxuries; political thought would center around military strategy; economic development would be determined exclusively by the needs of war. And all this would be the fate of a nation that—no matter how many immigrants it could still absorb and how far it extended its boundaries (the whole of Palestine and Transjordan is the insane Revisionist demand)—would still remain a very small people greatly outnumbered by hostile neighbors.

Under such circumstances (as Ernst Simon has pointed out) the Palestinian Jews would degenerate into one of those small warrior tribes about whose possibilities and importance history has amply informed us since the days of Sparta. Their relations with world Jewry would become problematical, since their defense interests might clash at any moment with those of other countries where large numbers of Jews lived. Palestine Jewry would eventually separate itself from the larger body of world Jewry and in its isolation develop into an entirely new people. Thus it becomes plain that at this moment and under present circumstances a Jewish state can only be erected at the price of the Jewish homeland.

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FORTUNATELY, there are still some Jews left who have shown in these bitter days that they have too much wisdom and too great a sense of responsibility to follow blindly where desperate, fanaticized masses would lead them. There are still, despite all appearances, a few Arabs who are unhappy about the increasingly fascist coloration of their national movements.

Until very recently, moreover, Palestinian Arabs were relatively unconcerned in the conflict with the Jews and the actual fighting against them is even now left to so-called volunteers from neighboring countries. But now even this situation has begun to change. The evacuations of Haifa and Tiberias by their Arab populations are the most ominous occurrences of the whole Arab-Jewish war so far. These evacuations could not have been carried out without careful preparation and it is hardly likely that they are spontaneous. Nevertheless, it is very doubtful that Arab leadership, which by creating homelessness among Palestinian Arabs aims to arouse the Moslem world, would have succeeded in persuading tens of thousands of city dwellers to desert all their earthly possessions at a moment's notice, had not the massacre of Deir Yassin struck fear of the Jews into the Arab population. And another crime that played into the hands of the Arab leadership had been committed only a few months back in Haifa itself when the Irgun had thrown a bomb into a line of Arab workers outside the Haifa refinery, one of the few places where Jews and Arabs had for years worked side by side.

The political implications of these acts, neither of which had any military objective whatsoever, are all too clear in both instances: they were aimed at those places where neighborly relations between Arabs and Jews had not yet been completely destroyed; they were intended to arouse the wrath of the Arab people in order to cut off the Jewish leadership from all temptations to negotiate; they created that atmosphere of factual complicity which is always one of the main prerequisites for the rise to power of terrorist groups. And, indeed, no Jewish leadership did come forward to stop the Irgun from taking political matters into its own hands and declaring war on all Arabs in the name of the Jewish community. The lukewarm protests of the Jewish Agency and the Haganah, forever limping behind, were followed two days later by an announcement from Tel Aviv that Irgun and Haganah were about to conclude an agreement. The Irgun attack on Jaffa, first denounced by Haganah, was followed by an agreement for joint action and the dispatch of Haganah units to Jaffa. This shows to what extent political initiative is already in terrorist hands.

The present Executive of the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi have by now amply demonstrated that they are either unwilling or incapable of preventing the terrorists from making political decision for the whole Yishuv. It is even questionable whether the Jewish Agency is still in a position to negotiate for a temporary truce, since its enforcement would largely depend upon the consent of the extremist groups. It is quite possible that this was one of the reasons why representatives of the Agency, though they must know the desperate needs of their people, allowed the recent negotiations for a truce to break down. They may have been reluctant to reveal to the whole world their lack of effective power and authority.

The United Nations and the United States have up to now simply accepted the elected delegates of the Jewish and the Arab peoples, which was of course the proper thing to do. After the breakdown of truce negotiations, however, it would seem that there are now only two alternatives left for the great powers: either to leave the country (with the possible exception of the holy places) to a war that not only may mean another extermination of Jews but may also develop into a large-scale international conflict; or else to occupy the country with foreign troops and rule it without giving much consideration to either Jews or Arabs. The second alternative is clearly an imperialist one and would very likely end in failure if not carried out by a totalitarian government with all the paraphernalia of police terror.

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However, a way out of this predicament may be found if the United Nations could summon up the courage in this unprecedented situation to take an unprecedented step by going to those Jewish and Arab individuals who at present are isolated because of their records as sincere believers in Arab-Jewish cooperation, and asking them to negotiate a truce. On the Jewish side, the so-called Ihud group among the Zionists, as well as certain outstanding non-Zionists, are clearly the people most eligible for this purpose at the moment.

Such a truce, or better, such a preliminary understanding—even negotiated between non-accredited parties—would show the Jews and the Arabs that it could be done. We know the proverbial fickleness of masses; there is a serious chance for a rapid and radical change of mood, which is the prerequisite for any real solution.

Such a move, however, could be effective only if concessions are made at once on both sides. The White Paper has been an enormous obstacle, in view of the terrible needs of Jewish DP's. Without the solution of their problem, no improvement in the mood of the Jewish people can be expected. Immediate admission of Jewish DP's to Palestine, though limited in terms of time and number, as well as immediate admission of Jewish and other DP's to the United States outside the quota system, are prerequisites for a sensible solution. On the other hand, the Palestinian Arabs should be guaranteed a well-defined share in the Jewish development of the country, which under any circumstances will still continue to be their common homeland. This would not be impossible if the huge amounts now expended in defense and rebuilding could be used instead for the realization of the Jordan Valley Authority project.

There can be no doubt that a trusteeship as proposed by President Truman and endorsed by Dr. Magnes is the best temporary solution. It would have the advantage of preventing the establishment of a sovereignty whose only sovereign right would be to commit suicide. It would provide a cooling-off period. It could initiate the Jordan Valley Authority project as a government enterprise and it could establish for its realization local Arab-Jewish committees under the supervision and the auspices of an international authority. It could appoint members of the Jewish and the Arab intelligentsia to posts in local and municipal offices. Last but not least, trusteeship over the whole of Palestine would postpone and possibly prevent partition of the country.

It is true that many non-fanatical Jews of sincere good will have believed in partition as a possible means of solving the Arab-Jewish conflict. In the light of political, military, and geographic realities, however, this was always a piece of wishful thinking. The partition of so small a country could at best mean the petrifaction of the conflict, which would result in arrested development for both peoples; at worst it would signify a temporary stage during which both parties would prepare for further war. The alternative proposition of a federated state, also recently endorsed by Dr. Magnes, is much more realistic; despite the fact that it establishes a common government for two different peoples, it avoids the troublesome majority-minority constellation, which is insoluble by definition. A federated structure, moreover, would have to rest on Jewish-Arab community councils, which would mean that the Jewish-Arab conflict would be resolved on the lowest and most promising level of proximity and neighborliness. A federated state, finally, could be the natural stepping stone for any later, greater federated structure in the Near East and the Mediterranean area.

A federated state, however, such as is proposed by the Morrison Plan, is outside the actual political possibilities of the day. As matters now stand, it would be almost as unwise to proclaim a federated state over the heads and against the opposition of both peoples as it has already been to proclaim partition. This is, certainly, no time for final solutions; every single possible and practicable step is today a tentative effort whose chief aim is pacification and nothing more.

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Trusteeship is not an ideal and not an eternal solution. But politics seldom offers ideal or eternal solutions. A United Nations trusteeship could be effectively carried through only if the United States and Great Britain were ready to back it up, no matter what happened. This does not necessarily mean great military commitments. There is still a good chance of recruiting police forces on the spot if the present memberships of the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency were to be denied authority in the country. Small local units composed of Jews and Arabs under the command of higher officers from countries that are members of the United Nations could become an important school for future cooperative self-government.

UNFORTUNATELY, in a hysterical atmosphere such proposals are only too liable to be dismissed as "stabs in the back" or unrealistic.

They are neither; they are, on the contrary, the only way of saving the reality of the Jewish homeland.

No matter what the outcome of the present deadlock, the following objective factors should be axiomatic criteria for the good and the bad, the right and the wrong:

1) The real goal of the Jews in Palestine is the building up of a Jewish homeland. This goal must never be sacrificed to the pseudo-sovereignty of a Jewish state.

2) The independence of Palestine can be achieved only on a solid basis of Jewish-Arab cooperation. As long as Jewish and Arab leaders both claim that there is "no bridge" between Jews and Arabs (as Moshe Shertok has just put it), the territory cannot be left to the political wisdom of its own inhabitants.

3) Elimination of all terrorist groups (and not agreements with them) and swift punishment of all terrorist deeds (and not merely protests against them) will be the only valid proof that the Jewish people in Palestine has recovered its sense of political reality and that Zionist leadership is again responsible enough to be trusted with the destinies of the Yishuv.

4) Immigration to Palestine, limited in numbers and in time, is the only "irreducible minimum" in Jewish politics.

5) Local self-government and mixed Jewish-Arab municipal and rural councils, on a small scale and as numerous as possible, are the only realistic political measures that can eventually lead to the political emancipation of Palestine.

It is still not too late.

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EQUALITY OR FRATERNITIES?

The Role of Secret Societies in Democratic Education

CAREY McWILLIAMS

IN THE late 1920's the *Yale News* published an anonymous letter from a Jewish student criticizing the social discrimination practiced by the junior and senior societies. For this offense, the student was promptly taken to task by the editor of the *American Hebrew*. "What is gained by setting up a howl for social recognition?" demanded the editor rhetorically. "No one wishes to pick his boon companions at the wailing wall, and no one will tap into a desired fraternity the too-facile vocalizer of his sorrows and his self-pity." Not only was the protest ill-advised, in the opinion of the *American Hebrew*, it was also factually incorrect. "A very limited number of Jews" had been admitted to these societies and the reason for their selection was clear: "they were socially desirable Yale men."

It must be said that many people, before and since, have not been so sanguine about the American fraternity system; and not only Jews. From its earliest days, it has been challenged as undemocratic, discriminatory, and a perversion of the educational aims that institutions of learning presumably exist to serve.

THE college fraternity system is a unique American growth. The first American social fraternities, in the modern sense, were Kappa Alpha, Sigma Phi, and Delta Phi, all formed at Union College in New York State—the mother of the fraternity system—between 1825 and 1827. In the first years of their existence the fraternities had to pursue a clandestine existence, for they ran counter to the widespread Jeffersonian aversion to "secret societies" of any kind. Denouncing the fraternity system as "this great evil," the Michigan faculty in the late 1840's reflected the general attitude by demanding oaths from incoming freshmen that they would not join secret societies.

The turning point in the fight for official recognition came in the 1880's, when President Emerson E. White of Purdue University, who had prohibited fraternities, was forced to resign after the Indiana Supreme Court ruled such prohibitions invalid as discrimination against "a class of citizens." The date is significant. It was toward the close of the 80's, as Veblen pointed out, that American colleges "definitively became leisure-class establishments, either in actual achievement or in aspiration." By 1885, the fraternity system was publicly on its feet and flexing its muscles.

THE fraternity system, alternately praised and condemned by American educators, has been a source of conflict and difficulty in our colleges and universities for almost three quarters of a century. Constantly under criticism as undemocratic, discriminatory, and subversive of the true process of education in a free society, the system has survived only because it has served a purpose important enough to its adherents to make them willing to fight for it. CAREY McWILLIAMS here offers an analysis of the system in terms of the real function which he sees concealed beneath its avowed "merely social" aims, and the rationalizations that have been used to justify it. Mr. McWilliams, a distinguished student of social problems and of social and ethnic stratification in American society, is the author of a number of books, including *Factories in the Field* (1939), *Ill Fares the Land* (1942), *Brothers Under the Skin* (1943), *Southern California Country* (1946), and, most recently, *A Mask for Privilege*, a study of anti-Semitism. Mr. McWilliams wrote the article "Does Social Discrimination Really Matter?" published in the November 1947 COMMENTARY. He was born in Colorado in 1905 and attended the University of Southern California.

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At that time, not more than twenty-five "old-line" social fraternities exercised an unchallenged social pre-eminence in those institutions where the system had taken root. After 1900, however, the number of colleges and the size of their student bodies increased enormously, and the equilibrium achieved in 1885 was seriously threatened. Dozens of "upstart" fraternities were formed, only to be denied recognition by the old-line organizations. A great deal of inter-fraternity rivalry was thus engendered. And despite the increase in the number of Greek-letter societies, fraternity membership lagged behind the increase in student population, thereby exacerbating friction between "barbs" and Greek-letter men.

In 1905 a strong movement arose to outlaw the fraternity system in the high schools, where they had multiplied rapidly, functioning in every respect like their collegiate counterparts. Most local school systems enforced regulations expelling students for forming secret societies, with the result that there is scarcely a single school system in the nation where secret fraternities have not been outlawed.

Criticism of the high-school fraternities, outlined in a report of the National Education Association in 1905, can be summed up as follows: the fraternities stimulated selfishness and snobbery, they interfered with school discipline, they made for undemocratic standards at variance with the values emphasized in the curriculum. All these charges were, of course, equally applicable to the colleges. The distinction was excused, at that time, on the ground that the character of high-school students was "unformed," but could not the same be said of the character of the average college freshman? Actually the real basis for the distinction was that the public schools were much closer to the people than the colleges and were sensitive to the democratic temper in a sense in which the colleges, so many of which were "private" in character, were not.

ONCE fraternities had been barred in the high schools, the college fraternities felt it necessary to forestall the possibility of an organized attack against themselves.

As their chief defensive act they formed the National Inter-Fraternity Conference in 1909. The "father" of the conference was Dr. William H. P. Faunce of Brown University. Always a staunch defender of the fraternity system, Dr. Faunce related its spread to the growth of the college population. It was impossible, he said, for a freshman to learn to love two thousand men at once; it was like "trying to be affectionate with the Atlantic Ocean." (But when Jewish students petitioned in the late 20's for permission to form a Jewish fraternity at Brown, Dr. Faunce strenuously opposed the application on the ground that such a fraternity would "kindle the fires of racial antagonism.")

The National Inter-Fraternity Conference took steps to cut the ground away from its critics. At the first meeting of the conference, the old-line houses were compelled, for the good of the system, to accept the "upstart" post-1900 fraternities and to accord them full and equal status, thus putting an end to much inter-fraternity rivalry and, at the same time, consolidating the existing groups into a compact and broadened system. Local campus inter-fraternity councils were established which also served to improve fraternity-faculty relationships.

However, the conference has consistently defended the "racial" exclusionist policies of its affiliates, despite the fact that a few old-line Jewish fraternities have been admitted to membership over the years. And at the campus level, many inter-fraternity councils have excluded Jewish and Negro fraternities. For example, the council at the University of Chicago refused in 1937 to accord recognition to Kappa Alpha Psi, a Negro fraternity. (It is an ironical fact that, in this situation as in others, American democracy has taken for granted extremes of social discrimination unknown in other countries.)

DESPITE the "reforms" of the National Inter-Fraternity Conference, a number of states continued their opposition to col-

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lege Greek-letter societies. South Carolina barred fraternities by legislation from its state university in 1897, and the bar was not removed until 1929. Mississippi took similar action in 1912, with the prohibition remaining in force until 1926. Between 1912 and 1916 unsuccessful attempts to outlaw the fraternity system were organized in Ohio, Wisconsin, Missouri, Texas, and other states. Arkansas adopted an act which prohibited fraternity men from holding faculty positions and denied student honors to fraternity members. When the attorney general ruled the legislation unconstitutional, no attempt was made to enforce it, although the statute was never repealed.

Most of the criticism, it can be seen, came from the South, the Middle West, and the Far West. The basis for this sectional variation is clear; in the smaller Eastern colleges a much higher percentage of the student body was absorbed into an established fraternity system. In colleges like Bowdoin, for example, it is still not uncommon to find eighty-five per cent of the students enrolled in fraternities. In the larger and more amorphous student bodies of the non-Eastern colleges, the fraternities were often—until the 1920's—regarded as offspring of Eastern snobbishness and exclusiveness. But in the period after the First World War, the fraternities, by a combination of stubbornness and flexibility, "sold" themselves to the American public as indigenous institutions.

The exclusionist policies of the fraternities were completely ignored in the barrage of criticism directed at them between 1900 and 1920. The general tendency of the social criticism characteristic of this period was a revolt, not so much against privilege as against the monopolization of privilege, and in this atmosphere, criticism of the fraternity system took on an oblique character that preferred not to get down to bed-rock. Those who were barred from the economic benefits of discrimination resented this fact and fought against it. They wanted to be cut in on a good thing.

Another reason why the exclusionist policies of the fraternities were ignored between 1900 and 1920 was that the groups excluded were busily imitating the social mode set by the fraternity system. A glance at the *National Jewish Blue Book: An Elite Directory*, issued in 1927, shows that Jewish students in American colleges had, by 1920, erected a fraternity system of their own that ran parallel, at all points, to the non-Jewish organizations. The Jewish organizations had the same pyramidal structure, and the oldest and most prominent Jewish fraternity at one time followed an unstated policy of initiating only students of German-Jewish ancestry. Similarly, Negroes have erected a completely parallel structure that now includes some twenty-five thousand members, students and alumni. And there are also a few exclusively Catholic societies: Theta Phi Alpha, a sorority with seventeen chapters; and Phi Kappa, a fraternity. In the general system, certain organizations have always stressed a specific Christian faith; thus Alpha Chi Rho has strong Anglican leanings. On the other hand, Phi Omega Pi, admits only those whose fathers, brothers, grandfathers, husbands, or uncles of blood relationship "are Masons in good standing."

THE sororities, never as influential as the fraternities, came into being somewhat later and arose, for the most part, in the small mid-Western "female" colleges. The sororities were organized into a general system in 1902 when the National Pan-Hellenic Congress was formed. In effect, the sororities occupy the same satellite relationship to the fraternities that the women's auxiliaries do in fraternal orders. Anyone who has attended an American college or university will be able to testify to this pairing of certain fraternities with certain sororities, usually on the basis of "similarity of personal background" —which more often than not means an identity of social class.

Despite its ups and downs, the fraternity system is still the most widespread and influential extra-curricular influence in our entire educational system. In 1943, sixty-five national fraternities had approximately 2,441 chapters, owned 1,815 chapter houses

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valued at eighty million dollars, and boasted a membership, student and alumni, of more than a million. In addition, there were some three hundred "local" unaffiliated groups with an unrecorded membership. *Newsweek* has estimated that 130 fraternities and sororities with nine thousand chapter organizations have a combined membership of one and a half million. However turbulent its early history, the fraternity system has now fully matured; today few higher educational institutions have withheld open recognition.

Over the years, the Greek-letter societies have changed little in organization, structure, or function. They are monotonously alike. All have adopted much the same ceremony and ritual, and the same symbols: a badge, a coat-of-arms, a flag, certain colors, a flower, a motto, a grip, a password—the indispensable paraphernalia of secret membership organizations aiming at "exclusiveness."

Like the fraternal orders (Elks, Shriners, etc.), Greek-letter societies aim to produce superior "types," and it is to this end that they feel it necessary to exclude certain racial and ethnic strains. Experienced faculty members have always insisted that they can easily forecast which "houses" the eligible freshmen will be pledged to. In campus parlance, Jane is "a Kappa type" and Bill is "a Beta type." (Similarly, as Dr. Noel P. Gist points out, the Elks appear to attract a type of membership rather different from that of the Masons.)

Both critics and apologists for the Greek-letter societies are in general agreement upon the criteria which determine eligibility for inclusion in the fraternity elite. Dr. Max McConn of Lehigh University has defined these criteria, in climactic order, as follows: money, family connections, the type of preparatory school attended, "personality." And, apart from the question of *which* fraternity a freshman is likely to join, it is apparent that there is a *general* "fraternity type." One shrewd observer has written: "If they have one common quality it is that they do not have to be explained: they are so instantaneously attractive as to make the reason for their selection immediately evident."

Now the qualities that make a person "instantaneously attractive" are determined by the prevailing mores, crystallized around the lines of power. "Personality," in this sense, is a highly conventionalized concept. The fraternity, like the fraternal order, operates to minimize change and conflict, particularly along social, economic, and political lines. So far as the *general* fraternity type is concerned, therefore, the prime characteristic is obviously conformity. What the fraternity system does, in effect, is to sift out, in the freshman year, the conformists from the non-conformists. The fraternities aim to recruit those students "most likely to succeed."

There are, of course, variations among conformists, just as there are various roads to "success." On the average American campus, the student body will be divided into two general groups: "Greeks" and "barbs"—conformists and non-conformists. Within the Greek category, however, two divisions can be noted. There is, first of all, the general pyramidal order of fraternities in terms of socio-economic position or degree of exclusiveness. In the college I attended, most students "rated" fraternities according to a neatly graduated scale, which was, in turn, reflected in the style of living and scale of expenditure of the various houses. One could also observe that each "house" tended to emphasize a particular quality and to select a particular type. Thus one house will be "political" (campus politics, of course), another will stress athletic ability, while a third will emphasize social life and the bottle, etc. But in each instance, the typing underscores a conventional means of attaining social acceptability via acceptance into a caste.

Once the conformists have been selected from the non-conformists, the fraternity system functions as a mold to fix these "types." First, the sheep are kept apart from the goats and thus tend to become more sheep-like; second, the sheep are trained and

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disciplined to produce what Veblen calls "a facility in subservience." The first aspect is so obvious as to require little comment. The sorority, as Edith Rickert critically remarks, aims at the elimination of those "incongruous and hostile elements" in the life of a girl which are often "conducive to growth." The girl is "cultivated instead of being allowed to grow"; she is crippled by the fact that "she is not allowed to come to grips with all sorts and conditions of people. By forcing her to associate with other conformists, the sorority buttresses her conventionality. To make this initial screening process as airtight as possible, the Greek-letter societies confer an absolute power on each individual member to exclude "undesirable" types by "blackballing," a practice universally followed.

The second aspect of the typing process is more complex but no less clearly defined. First of all, the "pledge" or neophyte undergoes a period of probation during which he is closely observed, disciplined, whipped into line, and freely criticized. His intimate friends, the girls he meets, and, to a degree, the clothes he wears and the mannerisms he affects, are all determined for him. Through an intricate system of rushing, pledging, and initiation, he is disciplined, counseled, criticized, and shaped to type. Since the Greek-letter societies are made up of students from the four classes of the college, the influence of the upper-classmen and of the alumni is brought to bear directly upon the lower-classmen, with the newly pledged freshman feeling the fullest weight of this influence in a most impressionable period of his life. At a time when he should be eager for new ideas and experiences, to deepen his knowledge of himself and the world about him—is not that the ultimate end of education?—the fraternity initiate has his personality flattened and standardized.

The fraternity alumni have come to exercise an increasingly dominant role in the affairs of the local chapters. In many cities, the alumni have formed large and often extremely influential clubs or associations, with either their own city club or a regularly reserved meeting place in the local university club. Today most chapter houses are owned by corporations, the shares of which are in turn owned by rich alumni. The alumni also provide committees to manage the properties, to supervise the affairs of the locals, and to regulate, to some extent, the conduct of the members of the local. This tendency is looked upon with great favor by many clever college administrators, since it ties the wealthier element among the alumni to the college with an intimacy of interest that is often lacking in the general alumni. But it is obvious that this form of remote control of college life by older men whose only qualification is financial cannot be happily regarded by the conscientious educator.

Given the dynamic quality of American life, on and off the campus, it is extremely doubtful that conformists could be effectively organized *as* conformists unless membership in a fraternal order or a Greek-letter society carried a premium value. Membership in the large national Greek-letter fraternities has always been recognized as a valuable practical asset. A certificate of social acceptability, it is also an aid to employment. Many of the large fraternities have revolving funds for scholarships, loans, and other direct aids (much as the fraternal orders offer insurance at low rates and other "benefits" of one kind or another). "The fraternity," writes Edith Rickert, "is frankly a social privilege which may become an invaluable business asset in after life."

In appraising the value of this privilege, it must be kept in mind that there are also some thirty large professional fraternities with one thousand chapters and about two hundred fifty thousand members. The professional fraternities have gained great strength in some professions, notably in law, medicine, and dentistry. These fraternities rigorously exclude Jews and Negroes, and have, in almost every profession, their Jewish and Negro counterparts. Of the members of my class in law school who belonged to my legal fraternity, at least fifty per cent

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were placed in various law offices after graduation through their fraternity connection. These legal fraternities also play an important role in advancing various "brothers" to the bench.

On the undergraduate level, the control exercised over the economic and social "plums" of our society can be enormous. A statistical breakdown of the opportunities in the industrial, financial, medical and legal, advertising, and journalistic fields afforded to the highly selected individuals "tapped" over the years by the three top secret Yale honorary societies, Skull and Bones, Scroll and Keys, and Wolf's Head, would tell an amazing story. Add now the fact that only one Jew has been admitted to these societies in a history of decades, although in the past twenty years Yale's enrollment of Jews has been around fifteen per cent—many obviously of high capacity and talent. The picture among the honorary societies in other major colleges is not markedly different. The relation of fraternity exclusiveness to economic privilege needs little further spelling out. That this relationship is an open secret to every undergraduate is obvious; and it is just as obvious that the system plays a crucial role in reinforcing the connection between social and business success and discrimination which runs like an ugly pattern through American life. In a thousand subtle and not-so-subtle ways the fraternity house is a training school in undemocratic doctrine and practice.

Nor should it be overlooked that the fraternity privilege tends to be hereditary. In my own acquaintance, I know of many cases in which three generations of the same family have belonged to the same social fraternity. And though the line of family succession may be often broken, the social class succession is firm and far-reaching. Graduation from certain preparatory schools will insure a pledge from certain fraternities, and membership in these fraternities will subsequently insure a pledge from certain professional fraternities.

In this respect, the fraternities have long utilized an elaborate "farm" system in recruiting members. When I was in law school, the legal fraternities largely limited their recruiting to the members of certain social fraternities. The official guide published by Harvard University in 1912 justified the existence of clubs on the ground that "they organize on lines of congeniality and common interest which determine social groupings in the great world," and then went on to say, a few pages later, that the members of Porcellian were recruited "from wealthy students of social prominence." A study of the membership of A. D. and Porcellian for the years 1905-1910 revealed that the members of these clubs had been recruited exclusively from a handful of Eastern preparatory schools; not a single member had come from a preparatory school in the South, the Middle West, or the Far West.

Owen Johnson, the author of *Stover of Yale*—a fine study of collegiate snobbery—wrote in *Collier's* in 1912 that the social usurpation of American colleges mirrored "the country-wide change from the struggle for industrial advancement to the consequent struggle for social betterment." Where the father had gone to college in the 80's to acquire the tools by which he hoped to create a fortune (and often did), the son went to college to win the social acceptance which had come to be regarded as the latter-day equivalent of ability, and which mirrored the transformation from aggressive capitalism to "managerialism." The sons of the moneyed aristocracy that came into being in the latter part of the last century, as Johnson noted, did not seek careers in the army, the church, and the government service; the tradition that sanctioned these careers for the wealthy in Great Britain was lacking in America. Instead, our rich and well-born went to college to be "tapped" for social position and business privilege. Often youngsters were carefully coached by their parents so that they might win a pledge from the "right house."

These parents knew what they were about. Although the struggle for place and

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position among the socially acceptable is intense, it takes place under circumstances which offer safeguards against complete failure so long as the game is played according to the rules. In the years between 1850 and 1920, which witnessed the rise and triumph of business enterprise in American life, an emerging upper class felt that it was necessary to impose certain "voluntary" social controls on the middle and lower-middle classes. And no aspect of this problem of control was more important than that presented by the colleges and universities, which traditionally had fixed the patterns of behavior for the upper strata of society. The fraternity system became a form of "leadership screening." If you could pass, on whatever count, you were admitted to membership in the society of the socially elite. While not necessarily a guarantee of success, this privilege certainly offered a running start.

Over the years an elaborate and constantly changing set of rationalizations has been used to justify the fraternity system. Joining a "congenial group," it is said, makes it possible for the student attending a large university far from home to make a better adjustment to college life. But congenial friendships do not necessarily arise out of the compulsive intimacy of the fraternity system, which is perhaps the most undiscriminating method of making intimate friends ever devised. It is also said that the fraternity provides a means for "completing individual development"—but its whole drive is toward conformity and conventionality. Another justification is that the system makes for "loyalty," which is doubtless true; but the question remains—loyalty to what? As Dr. Gist has argued, secret societies invariably emphasize the conventional moral and ethical values of the larger social system and are, almost by definition, bulwarks of the status quo.

The most common rationalization is that "snobbishness is not made by fraternal organizations," and, therefore, their abolition would not eliminate snobbishness. To the same effect, educators have said that "the gregarious instinct" and "the play instinct" are "ineradicable human instincts"; hence this "human clubbing-up instinct" is a constant in human behavior. But, one would think, snobbishness is clearly the product of a kind of social conditioning that it should be one of the main functions of a democratic educational system to correct.

It has also been said that "if bowlegged men want to form a group, they have a right to form such a group and let the straight-legged men and the knock-kneed men form their own groups." (This statement was advanced by the National Inter-Fraternity Conference, at its meeting in New York, December 19, 1947, in defense of the social discrimination of its affiliates.) This assumes that the fraternities exist without relation to the structure of social and economic power within the society, an assumption that cannot be validated. (Mr. David A. Embury, Chairman of the National Inter-Fraternity Conference also stated at the same meeting that people should "stop shivering at the word 'discrimination.' I love the discriminating tongue," he said, "the discriminating eye, and the discriminating ear, and above all, the discriminating mind and soul. The person for whom I can find no love and no respect is the indiscriminate person. To be indiscriminate is to be common, to be vulgar.")

There are scores of similar rationalizations, and I have come to the conclusion that there are only three that warrant serious consideration. There was a time in the history of the higher learning in America when fraternities served a useful if limited economic function. In the small college of forty years ago—and most colleges were then small—it was often impractical to maintain a system of dormitories. A small group of congenial students could then band together, rent a house, and hire a cook. But once the large-scale dormitory came into being, the average fraternity house, which at best provides accommodations for twenty or thirty boys, became a luxurious and costly anachronism. Rising costs for repairs,

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upkeep, taxes, services, and other charges have, in fact, already begun to limit fraternity membership.

It is also true, as many defenders of the fraternities have pointed out, that the rapid increase of the college population after 1900 created a situation in which some extra-curricular form of discipline was valuable. But American educators had united in condemning the fraternity system in the high schools precisely because it intensified the problem of discipline. What college administrators really have in mind when they advance this rationalization is that the fraternity system has been a reliable anchor to windward against tendencies toward independent thinking and liberalism in the student body. In surrendering to the fraternities, as Owen Johnson put it, the college administrators made it possible for forces outside the campus to impose their standards of success on the body of American students and thus robbed American college education of much of its democratic promise. Visiting European professors have often expressed great surprise at the general conservatism of American students.

The final rationalization is somewhat more subtle. Before 1890 attendance at American high schools and colleges was confined to about five per cent or less of the youth of the country; but after 1900 the number attending collegiate institutions increased three to fourfold. More and more students came to college who were not interested in learning, either in terms of a liberal education or as professional training, but looked upon college education as a useful investment in social polish and a way of acquiring "connections," along with a smattering of information. Faced with this new influx, many college administrators felt compelled to acquiesce in the growth of highly organized extra-curricular activities, among them fraternities. Somehow these sojourners-in-college, as distinguished from the students, had to be kept occupied.

But a moment's reflection reveals that extra-curricular activities do not depend upon the existence of fraternities. Open membership, non-secret organizations have proved quite as effective in the high schools, and college administrators, one can presume, might have preferred the same solution as the high school officials. But high schools are not dependent upon grants, endowments, and subsidies. College students are still largely recruited from the middle class, a class which has always regarded the colleges and universities as falling peculiarly within its orbit of influence; and the development of social control within the middle class imposed the fraternity system on the colleges.

TODAY a new wind is blowing on American campuses. This time the revolt is directed at the most tell-tale aspect of the fraternity system: its systematic exclusion of certain ethnic groups. It is here that the control function of fraternities is most nakedly revealed. As we have pointed out, the purpose of such exclusionist practices, like social discrimination in the adult world, is to "corner" the advantages—and economic dividends—for those already enjoying them; the delights of power vary inversely with the number who share it. And ethnic groups, conveniently identifiable as "different," offer an easy basis for holding down the number of the privileged (cf. my article "Does Social Discrimination Really Matter?" in the November 1947 COMMENTARY). On the other hand, those with a militant commitment to democracy find in exclusionist practices a natural, glaring target.

Only this fall students at the University of California at Santa Barbara (formerly Santa Barbara State College) offered an amendment to the constitution of the Associated Students which, if adopted, would have denied campus recognition and privileges to any organization that restricted membership on the basis of race, religion, or color. While the amendment was defeated by a narrow margin, the students have not abandoned the fight to secure its adoption. Last December, representatives of the Greek-letter organizations at the University of Minnesota agreed that restrictions on membership should be abolished; and not

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one student at this conference spoke out against the motion. On a recent visit to the University of Wyoming, I found that a group of students have organized a local fraternity which admits Jews and Negroes to membership. The University of Washington in Seattle has adopted a code barring new social or fraternal groups that restrict their membership on a racial or religious basis. At the last meeting of the National Inter-Fraternity Conference, delegates from the Western Inter-Fraternity Conference submitted a resolution asking that discriminatory clauses be eliminated. And other examples of student action against discrimination could be cited.

College administrators in institutions that for years have been fraternity strongholds have begun to change their attitude. In the spring of 1946, the authorities at Amherst told the thirteen fraternities on the campus that they would not be permitted to open in the fall unless they agreed to drop racial and religious discriminations and to scale down the sums paid by the Amherst locals to their national bodies. One fraternity, Delta Tau Delta, instructed its Amherst local to reject the ruling or forfeit its charter; the local promptly disaffiliated from the national. At Arizona State Teachers College, Dean Grimes has announced that he intends, if possible, to deny recognition to any organization that restricts membership on the basis of race, religion, or color.

But the fraternity system will not be easily abolished nor will discriminatory clauses vanish without a struggle. The struggle may be expected to reach major proportions when it is carried to the powerfully entrenched professional fraternities.

That the fraternity system can be abolished in state universities—and by fraternity system, let me repeat, I mean secret, selective membership associations—was clearly established in the case of Waugh v. University of Mississippi, which the United States Supreme Court decided in 1915. While it is doubtful if legislation of this kind can be applied to so-called "private" institutions, it should be pointed out that in at least twelve states the properties of college fraternities have been granted tax-exemption by statute. State legislatures can clearly attach conditions to such grants or can revoke them. However, it is not so much the abolition, but rather the gradual transformation of the fraternity system that is to be expected in the near future. Although the National Inter-Fraternity Conference continues to defend exclusionist policies, it may once again momentarily save the system by yielding on this point.

But no minor reforms can eliminate the basic problem: The fraternity system exists as a calculated interference with the democratic potential of American education, a device by which forces external to the campus seek to organize students for ready classification and "placing" in the general scheme of things. In the long run, the fraternity system seems likely to disappear —and no one concerned with the fulfillment of the democratic promise is likely to regret its passing.

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THE TWO GREAT TRADITIONS

The Sephardim and the Ashkenazim

ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

IN OUR endeavor to shape a cultural pattern for American Jewish life, we might do well to look for some orientation that will help us determine our position in the stream of Jewish history. How should we regard the major trends of the past? To what period can we feel most closely related?

In the past thousand years two major traditions flowered in Jewish life, corresponding to the two groups that have successively held the spiritual hegemony: first the Spanish Sephardic; in the later period, the Ashkenazic.

The Sephardic group is composed of the descendants of Jews who settled in the Iberian peninsula during the Mohammedan period; Spain is called in Hebrew *Sephard* and these Jews are therefore known as *Sephardim.* Emigrated or expelled from Spain and Portugal in the 15th century, these Jews settled largely along the Mediterranean coast and in Holland, England, and their dependencies.

The Ashkenazic community includes the descendants of Jews who came from Babylon and Palestine to the Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe, and who since the later Middle Ages have spoken German or Yiddish. They are called *Ashkenazic* Jews, from the Hebrew word *Ashkenaz,* which means Germany.

Up to the 19th century, all Ashkenazic Jews who lived in the area bounded by the Rhine and the Dnieper and by the Baltic and the Black Seas, and in some neighboring regions as well, presented a culturally uniform group. At the center of this cultural period stood Rashi, the greatest commentator on the Bible and the Talmud, as well as Rabbi Jehuda the Pious and his circle. The spiritual development of the Ashkenazic period reached its climax in Eastern Europe, particularly with the spread of the Hasidic movement. Today the Ashkenazim form the preponderant majority of our people.

THE Jews of the Iberian peninsula were responsible for the earlier brilliant epoch in Jewish history, distinguished not only by monumental scientific achievements but also by a universality of spirit. Their accomplishment was in some respects a symbiosis of Jewish tradition and Moslem civilization.

The intellectual life of the Jews in Spain was deeply influenced by the surrounding world. Literary forms, scientific methods, philosophical categories, and even theological principles were often adopted from the Arabs. Influenced and enriched in their writing and thinking by foreign patterns, Jewish authors were inclined to stress basic agreements between the doctrines of their faith and the theories of great non-Jewish

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thinkers. Indeed, they often seemed to emphasize the elements Judaism had in common with classical philosophy to the neglect of its own specific features. They were under constant challenge and attack by members of other creeds, and felt compelled to debate and to defend the principles of their faith.

In the Ashkenazic period the spiritual life of the Jews was lived in isolation. Accordingly, it grew out of its own ancient roots, and developed in an indigenous environment, independent of the trends and conventions of the surrounding world. Intellectually more advanced than the average man of their Germanic or Slavic neighbors, the Jews unfolded unique cultural patterns in thinking and writing, in their communal and individual ways of life. Tenaciously adhering to their own traditions, they concentrated upon the cultivation of what was most their own, what was most specific and personal. They borrowed from other cultures neither substance nor form. What they wrote was literature created by Jews, about Jews, and for Jews. They apologized to no one, neither to philosophers nor theologians, nor did they ask the commendation of either prince or penman. They felt no need to compare themselves with anyone else, and they wasted no energy in refuting hostile opinions.

There, in Eastern Europe, the Jewish people came into its own. It did not live like a guest in somebody else's house who must constantly keep in mind the ways and customs of the host. There Jews lived without reservation and without disguise, outside their homes no less than within them. When they used the phrase "the world asks" in their commentaries on the Talmud, they did not refer to a problem raised by Aristotle or a medieval philosopher. Their fellow students of Torah were to them the "world."

THE culture of Spanish-Sephardic Jews was shaped by an elite; it was derived from above and was hardly touched by the archaic simplicity, imaginative naivety, and unaffected naturalness of the humble mass.

In Spain, Jewish men of learning drew inspiration from classical philosophy and science. Frequently they took Arabic poetry and Greek ethics as prototypes. Jewish scholars absorbed themselves in research, designing their books frequently for limited groups, or even for single individuals. Their point of view was aristocratic. Their poems were often written in a Hebrew so complicated and involved that only the erudite could enjoy them. Under the influence of Arabic metric and rhetoric, the innate genius of Hebrew, with its chasteness, severity, and limpid strength, gave way to an arabesque manner. Writers reveled in fanciful, ornamental tropes that delight the fancy of the connoisseur rather than capture feeling. Employed to grace the facade of a sentence, words were grouped in fantastic combinations. And in books translated from the Arabic, the Hebrew was usually made to conform to the modes of the Arabic original.

On the lips of Ashkenazic Jews, Hebrew was freed from the golden chains of a complex rhetoric, and it came to be as easy and natural as the Hebrew of the authors of the Midrash in the early centuries of the modern era. This Hebrew was not like a festive Oriental carpet that is trod with measured step, but like a soft *talit,* like a prayer scarf, at the same time sacred and common, in which you can wrap yourself and be alone with your God. The Ashkenazim did not write *piyutim,* the elaborate and often complicated liturgical poems favored by Sephardic authors; they wrote mostly *selihot,* simple penitential prayers and elegies. They drew their style from the homespun prose of Talmudic sayings rather than from the lofty rhetoric of the Prophets. The thunder of the Book of Job is absent from their writings. Other rhythms and other tones prevail. The Hebrew of the Ashkenazic books on morality or piety is saturated with the sadness, yearning, and contrition of the Book of Psalms.

Further, the East European Jews created their own language, Yiddish, which was born out of a will to make intelligible, to explain, and simplify the tremendous com-

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plexities of the sacred tongue. Thus there arose, as though spontaneously, a mother tongue, a direct expression of feeling, a mode of speech without ceremony or artifice, a language that speaks itself without taking devious paths, a tongue that has a maternal simplicity and warmth. In this language you say "beauty" and mean "spirituality"; you say "kindness" and mean "holiness." Few languages can be spoken so simply and so directly; there are but few languages that lend themselves with such difficulty to falseness. No wonder that Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav would sometimes choose Yiddish to pour his heart out and present his grievances to God.

IN THE Sephardic period every book or manuscript was a rare treasure. Few communities were fortunate enough to possess copies of all six sections of the Talmud. In the Ashkenazic period, Jews had all the texts; books were printed continually. The gates to the Torah were opened. Every community had the Talmud and the Code of Law, the *Shulhan Aruch,* the legal system of Maimonides, and the classical work of Jewish mysticism, *The Book of Splendor.*

Numerous Spanish Jews had possessed high secular learning. Their achievements in medicine, mathematics, and astronomy contributed greatly to the development of European civilization as a whole. And their translations of scientific and philosophical works from Arabic into Latin served as cultural mediators, making available to the European nations the treasures of literature and science then in Arab custody.

On the other hand, knowledge of Jewish lore does not seem to have been widespread among Spanish Jews. Young people were not accustomed to putting their minds exclusively to the study of the Torah. The educational programs drawn up for Jewish schools had but modest objectives. The celebrated poet and metaphysician, Rabbi Solomon Ibn Gabirol, complains that the people do not understand the sacred tongue. Rabbi Solomon Parhon, a grammarian who was a disciple of Rabbi Jehuda Halevi, wrote: "In our country (Spain) people are not well versed in the Hebrew language," but the Ashkenazic Jews "are accustomed to think and speak in Hebrew." Many Sephardic authors wrote largely in Arabic; even works dealing with questions of Jewish ritual, homilies on the Bible, commentaries on the Talmud, were written in Arabic. But to an Ashkenazic author it would have seemed inconceivable to write his works in a foreign tongue.

Because the ideals of the Ashkenazic Jews were shared by all, the relations between the various parts of the community—between the scholarly and the ignorant, the yeshiva student and the trader—had an intimate, organic character. The earthiness of the villagers, the warmth of plain people, and the spiritual simplicity of the *maggidim* or lay preachers penetrated into the *bet midrash,* the house of prayer that was also a house of study and learning. Laborers, peasants, porters, artisans, storekeepers, all were partners in the Torah. The *maggidim*—the term presumably originated in Eastern Europe—did not apply for diplomas to anyone. They felt authorized by God to be preachers of morals.

Here, in the Ashkenazic realm, the amalgamation of Torah and Israel was accomplished. Ideals became folkways, divine imperatives a human concern; the people itself became a source of Judaism, a source of spirit. The most distant became very intimate, very near. Spontaneously, without external cause, the people improvised customs of celestial solemnity. The dictates of feeling were heeded as commandments of highest authority. Jews began to know what it means: "From within my flesh do I see the Lord."

Sephardic books are distinguished by their strict logical arrangement. They are composed according to a clear plan; every detail has its assigned place, and the transitions from one subject to another are clear and simple. Ashkenazic writers forego clarity for the sake of depth. The contours of their thoughts are irregular, vague, and often perplexingly entangled; their content is rest-

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less, animated by inner wrestling and a kind of baroque emotion.

Sephardic books are like Raphaelesque paintings, Ashkenazic books like the works of Rembrandt, profound, allusive, and full of hidden meanings. The former favor the harmony of a system, the latter the tension of dialectic; the former are sustained by a balanced solemnity, the latter by impulsive inspiration. The strength of the Sephardic scholars lies in their mastery of expression, that of the Ashkenazim in the unexpressed overtones of their words. A spasm of feeling, a passionate movement of thought, an explosive enthusiasm, will break through the form.

Sephardic books are like neatly trimmed and cultivated parks, Ashkenazic writings like enchanted ancient forests; the former are like a story with a beginning and an end, the latter have a beginning but frequently turn into a story without an end.

The renowned, painstaking grammarians of the Hebrew tongue came from among the Sephardim; the Ashkenazim are more interested in the dynamics of keen *gematria*—the art of finding implications believed to be contained in the numerical values of letters in Scripture—than in transparent, sober grammatical forms. In later times critical, literal exegesis of Scripture almost disappeared.

Eminently concerned with preserving the Jewish spiritual heritage, the Sephardim were unsurpassed masters at systematizing, collating, and codifying the scattered multiplex wealth of Jewish lore accumulated in the course of previous ages. The Ashkenazim were less eager to collect than to disclose, to probe for deeper meanings; for them, the prime motive was not to know and remember, but to discover and understand; it was not the final decision that was important, but the steps of the syllogism whereby it was arrived at.

In the code of law, *Mishneh Torah,* composed by that foremost Sephardic master, Maimonides, the matter is arranged according to logical concepts; the stream of laws and precepts is converted into an abstract system. In the *Arba Turim,* compiled by the Ashkenazic Rabenu Jacob, son of the Rosh (14th century), which forms the basis of the *Shulhan Aruch,* the laws are arranged according to the daily routine of every Jew, beginning with his rising in the morning and ending with the night-prayer, the *Shema.* Maimonides' system is logical, but the *Arba Turim* is a mirror reflecting life as it is.

Classical books were not written in Eastern Europe. The Talmud, the *Mishneh Torah,* the *Book of Splendor,* the *Guide to the Perplexed,* and *Tree of Life* were produced in other countries. East European Jews did not cherish the ambition to create consummate, definitive expressions. And because their books are indigenous to their time and place and rooted in a self-contained world, they are less accessible to moderns than those of Sephardic authors. The Ashkenazic Jews were not interested in writing literature; their works read like brief lecture-notes. They are products, not of pure research, but of discussions with pupils. The Ashkenazim rarely composed books that stand like separate buildings with foundations of their own, books that do not lean upon older works; they wrote commentaries or notes on the classical works of olden times, books that modestly hug the monumental walls of older citadels.

THE Sephardim aspired to personal perfection and attempted to express their ideals rationally. They strove for tranquility of soul, for inner peace and contentment. Their ethics was at times bourgeois, full of prudence and practical wisdom. To follow the golden rule, to take a middle course and avoid extremes, was one of their most popular maxims. The Cabala remained a pursuit of the few; in contrast to the situation in Eastern Europe, the life of the people in the Sephardic community was hardly touched by the bold mystic doctrines of some of its rabbis.

But Ashkenazic ethics knows no perfection that is definable; its vision aimed at the infinite. Never compromising, never satisfied, always striving: "Seek higher than that."

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The Ashkenazic moralist or Hasid was exalted; he yearned for the transcendental, the preternatural. He somehow felt that not only space, but also the soul was endless. Not for him the tranquil contemplation, the gradual ascent. What he sought was boundless fervor, praying and learning without limit or end. For though the seeker is engaged in a persistent struggle with the material and finite and cannot escape himself permanently, he can at least aspire to divest himself, in short moments of ecstasy, of all earthly concerns.

What distinguishes Sephardic from Ashkenazic culture is, however, primarily a difference of form rather than a divergence of content. It is a difference that cannot be characterized by the categories of rationalism versus mysticism or of the speculative versus the intuitive mentality. The difference goes beyond this and might be more accurately expressed as a distinction between a *static* form in which the spontaneous is subjected to strictness and abstract order and a *dynamic* form that does not compel the content to conform to what is already established. The dynamic form is attained by subtler and more directed means. Room is left for the outburst, for the surprise, for the instantaneous. The inward counts infinitely more than the outward.

The dualism of Sephardic and Ashkenazic did not disappear with the tragic expulsion from Spain in 1492. The Sephardic strain, striving after measure, order, and harmony, and the Ashkenazic strain, with its preference for the spontaneous and dynamic, can both be traced down to the modern period. The Sephardim retained their independent ways in custom and thought and refused to amalgamate. In their seclusion, a severe loyalty to their heritage was combined with a feeling of pride in the splendor of their past. Their synagogue services were like silent mirrors of the ancient rite. The spontaneous was tamed, the unbecoming eliminated. But the continual trimming of the offshoots tended to suppress any aesthetic drive in the roots.

The Ashkenazic Jew, on the other hand, remained averse to constraining the fluent into stiff forms. Kept spiritually alive by a sense of the immense rather than by a sense of balance, he would not yield to the admonitions of the few systematically minded scholars in his midst. The passion for the unlimited could not be conditioned by a regard for proportion and measure.

Much of what the Sephardim created was adopted by the Ashkenazim and transformed. Under the spell of the Hasidim, the rich and ponderous speculations of the Sephardic mystics were stripped of their tense and stern features without any loss of profoundity or earnestness. The lofty and elaborate doctrines of the Cabala were melted into thoughts understandable by the heart.

In modern times the Sephardic mentality was perhaps best exemplified by Spinoza. Indeed he owes many elements of his system to medieval Sephardic philosophy; and though he rejected its predominant aspirations, his thought pushed certain tendencies inherent in that tradition to extremes. His aristocratic intellectualism, for instance, led him to divide sharply between the piety and morality of the people and the speculative knowledge of the few. God is conceived of as a principle of mathematical necessity, a sort of logical shell in which all things exist; logical thinking alone can bring men into a relation with God. Personalism of any kind is excluded. It is remarkable how limited was the influence of Spinoza's philosophy even upon those Jewish thinkers who departed from religious tradition.

The stream of Sephardic Jewish culture was not confined, however, within the so-called Spanish-Portuguese communities. In the modern period, its influence permeated other Jewish groups, especially in Germany. It was the admiration of 19th-century German Jewish scholars for the Sephardic Middle Ages that determined the mood of the modern "Science of Judaism" (*Wissenchaft des Judentums*).

The scholars of emancipated German Jewry saw in the Spanish period the "Gold-

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en Age" of Jewish history, and celebrated it as a happy blend of progress and traditionalism upon which they desired to model their own course. In their research they went to the point of applying the cultural standards of the "Golden Age" to the literature of later centuries. For some Jewish scholars, any Jewish literature dating after 1492, the year in which Jewish life in Spain ceased, was not considered worthy of scholarly investigation. Their example was followed in forming the curricula of the higher schools of Jewish learning, which gave no place to works written after 1492 and before the beginning of modern Hebrew literature.

This desire for inner identification with the Spanish Jewish period reflected itself in the synagogue architecture of the 19th century. Liberal Jewish synagogues in Central Europe were built in the Moorish style as if the stucco arabesque, horseshoe arches, and dados of glazed and painted tiles were the aptest possible expressions of the liberal Jew's religious mood.

Hand in hand with the romantic admiration of the Sephardim that became one of the motifs of Reform Judaism in Germany went social aspirations, too. The social standing of the few Sephardim in Germany was superior to that of the Ashkenazim, and the leaders of the new Reform movement, anxious to develop a new and more advanced way of Jewish life that would abandon the traditional forms still adhered to by the Jewish masses, often blatantly imitated the manners of the Sephardim. In the Portuguese synagogues they found that solemnity and decorum which they missed in the old *shul.* It was hardly for scientific reasons that the Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew was introduced in the early "temples."

In consequence, the modern Ashkenazic Jew, particularly in Central Europe, often came to lose his appreciation of the value of his own original way of life. He developed an embarrassed aversion for the dramatic, for the moving and vivid style, whether in the synagogue or in human relations. For him dignity grew to mean something to be achieved by strict adherence to an established, well-balanced, mannerly form undisturbed by any eruption of the sudden and spontaneous. Thus Hermann Cohen wrote in 1916 that the elimination of the dramatic manner from the worship of East European Jews would turn the synagogues into "seats of true culture."

This lack of understanding for and alienation from the values of the Ashkenazic traditions became complete. Describing the way in which the Hasidim prayed, a prominent Jewish historian, in a work first published in 1913 and reprinted in 1931, could write:

"The [Hasidic] movement did not signify a gain for religious life; the asset that lay in its striving for inwardness was more than cancelled out by the preposterousness of its superstitious notions and of its unruly behavior. . . . According to its principles, Hasidism meant a total revolt against the divine service (sic!); nothing could have made the untenability of the latter more striking than the fact that great numbers of people should turn away from it, not out of scepticism or doubt, but out of a most intense yearning for piety. . . . Hasidism contributed to the deterioration rather than to the improvement of the divine service . . . its noise and wild, restless movements brought new factors of disturbance. . . . It is no wonder that at such a time complaints were made about the lack of devoutness and attention, about the disorder and interruptions. The divine service stood in need of a thorough renovation and restoration if it was to survive. The modern age [read: the Reform movement—A. J. H.] supplied both."

IN LOOKING for an orientation for American Jewry, it seems clear that neo-Sephardic modes do not represent the spirit of our own generation. Often they only conceal, or even eradicate, precious elements deeply rooted in the inner life of our people. We cannot afford to dispense with the *niggun,* the spontaneous note that rises from within, simply for the sake of acquiring solemnity and artificial decorum, qualities that hardly express the essential mood of the modern Jew.

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Our generation can hardly think of Jewish religious life as an objectivized, ceremonious cult, repeating what is derived from whatever philosophy happens to be in vogue at the moment, and strictly congruous with contemporary tendencies. Though the analytical study of Jewish literature and history carried out by the neo-Sephardic movement has greatly enriched and widened our knowledge, its pedantic and abstract knowledge must be supplemented by inwardness and spontaneity, by the common experiences and expressions of the people, by the powers won in struggle with immediate problems, by grief and joy.

We still carry deeply rooted prejudices against the Ashkenazic heritage, particularly as it was developed in Eastern Europe. That prejudice has divided us and distorted our sense of values—it has also had tragic results. In our zeal to expand the scope of our intellectual endeavors we should beware lest we lose the sense of that which is our very essence. Hardly a better mirror exists in which to recognize the unique features of our own origins than the cultural life of East European Jewry. This must not be measured by Sephardic standards—to do so would be equivalent to weighing the beauties of Gothic architecture on the scales of classical Greek. On the other hand, if the right categories are applied, unique values will be revealed.

Magnificent synagogues are not enough if they mean a petrified Judaism. Nor will the stirrings of creative life in Palestine find any echo if brilliance is held more important than warmth.

In the elementary textbooks of Hebrew in use a quarter of a century ago, there was a story of a schoolboy with a poor memory who had a hard time finding his clothes and books in the morning. One evening he hit upon an answer to his troubles. He wrote on a slip of paper: "The suit is on the chair, the hat is in the closet, the books on the desk, the shoes under the chair, and I am in bed."

Next morning he began to collect his things together. They were all in their places. When he came to the last item on the list he went to look for himself in the bed—but his search was in vain.

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CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE COMMUNISTS

Checking Subversion Without Harm to Democratic Rights

ROBERT BENDINER

GONE are the days when only the so-called butcher-paper magazines printed articles about threats to civil liberties. Today almost any periodical you pick up is likely to have a piece on the subject.

The *Ladies Home Journal* for January carried two pages by Dorothy Thompson on "How to Protect Civil Liberties" without giving the country to the Communists. *Life* recently put the solemn editorial question "Is There a Witch Hunt?" *Harper's* followed an impassioned plea for calmness by Henry Steele Commager, entitled "Who is Loyal to America?" with James A. Wechsler's suggestions on "How to Rid the Government of Communists." And *Collier's* has had Charles Luckman explain to its readers that "Civil Rights Means Good Business."

The *New York Times Magazine* paid its respects to the thorny subject with a report on the effects abroad of the breach between our pretensions and our practices, while the *Herald Tribune* of the same city featured for several days a running debate between its editors and E. B. White over the firing of the ten Hollywood screenwriters, with dozens of correspondents joining in by way of the letter columns. Labeling himself "member of a party of one," White suggested that the paper's editorial writer, who had made out a case for the movie producers, had "tripped over the First Amendment and thought it was the office cat"; for which the *New Yorker* editor was, in turn, upbraided, along with all other such gentle anarchists, as "probably the most dangerous single elements in our confused and complicated society." Thus the Bill of Rights emerges from the appendix of schoolbooks into the arena of everyday affairs, debated and scrapped over in print—and over the air as well—by a people not normally given to political abstractions.

Why this sudden preoccupation? Is our whole system of civil rights really being undermined by jittery officials—or are the jitters all on the other side, deliberately stimulated by those whose interest is to have us believe the worst of our government? Twenty-two learned men of the Yale Law School see "alarming signs that persecution for opinion, if not soon curbed, may reach a point never hitherto attained even in the darkest periods of our history." On the other hand, everyone agrees that never has a government commission taken so forthright a stand as the President's Committee on Civil Rights, even in the brightest periods of our history. Nor, perhaps, was there ever a time when so many Americans were so actively vigilant to spot and protest against encroachments on our liberties.

Clearly neither of the questions put above can be answered with a flat affirmative.

IS THERE a witch hunt in America? Recent efforts to eliminate Communists from government activities, along with the proposed anti-Communist legislation now before Congress, present a problem of extraordinary complexity to those concerned with the preservation of civil liberties in this country. ROBERT BENDINER, who here seeks to penetrate the hysteria and disingenuousness which have surrounded this question, is well known as a liberal writer on politics and foreign relations. He is now associate editor of the *Nation* and was managing editor of that periodical for six years before the war. He has published scores of articles in the *Nation* and other liberal publications, including *Tomorrow* and the *American Mercury*, and was a correspondent for *Yank* while in the army during the past war. He has also published a book, *The Riddle of the State Department* (1942). Mr. Bendiner was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1909.

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There is obviously some hysteria in high places, of both the genuine and synthetic varieties, and there is counter-hysteria in the country, likewise both real and simulated. The problem is to dig through the layers of hypocrisy on both sides, to consider the motives of the propagandists, and then see where we find ourselves.

GIVEN their determination to discredit the Truman administration, it is natural for the Communists and their allies to find in Washington today a perfect parallel with the period of A. Mitchell Palmer. "Witch hunt"—"thought police"—"Gestapo terrorism"—"police state"—these are a few of the terms used to suggest the parallel. Undeniably the two periods have points in common, but the present "red scare" is watered milk compared with the violent brew offered by the combined forces of the FBI and the burgeoning American Legion in the early 20's. That campaign was aimed primarily at the growing trade-union movement, with the IWW taking the brunt of the attack. "Bolshevik" was the universal label for all dissidents, and deportation and violence were the order of the day. On the night of January 2, 1920, Palmer's men, throwing a dragnet from coast to coast, arrested literally thousands of "undesirables"—more than eight hundred in the Boston area alone. Most of them were freed in time, after such humiliations as being paraded through city streets in handcuffs and chains, but hundreds were shipped off to Europe after the most summary and prejudiced hearings. With the unofficial but effective aid of the Legionnaires and the cooperation of local police, the anti-Bolshevik crusaders smashed meeting halls, clubbed heads, searched and seized without regard for legalities, and in general put on as brazen a show as the world was to see until the appearance of the *Sturmabteilung*. Political lynchings took place in Centralia and Butte, strikers were commonly forced by the police to kneel and kiss the flag, and the legislature of New York State expelled a number of properly elected assemblymen solely because they were known members of the Socialist party.

Those were terrifyingly dark days for civil liberties—dark enough to make one wonder at the sweeping assertions of the Yale professors. Far from seeking to outlaw the Communists, the same J. Edgar Hoover who served under Palmer now specifically asks Congress not to drive the party underground and thereby make harder the job of checking on its activities. It is true that there have been noisy and, in two instances, violent demonstrations at meetings for Henry Wallace, and that a university has taken repressive action against a pro-Wallace professor. Such incidents show that the rule of law and liberty is by no means as inviolable as it should be. But the response to these performances in the country at large is hardly encouraging to a revival of the rough-house technique. Far from winning the approval they would have had in 1920, the strong-arm devotees of 1948—and they are fortunately few so far—have been widely condemned in the press and denounced by the President.

If, in view of this comparison, the cries of hysteria raised on the Left are in themselves somewhat hysterical, it does not follow that the current threat to civil rights is to be taken lightly, or that we do not face a serious problem. On the contrary, the present crisis is more significant because so much more complicated. The Palmer onslaught was as simple as it was crude. The war and the stepped-up pace of industrialization had given labor organizations an impetus that was a threat not to the political life of the nation but solely to the profits of industry. The Legion openly placed itself at the service of big business, whose creature indeed it was, and the resulting series of clashes, combined with the inevitable postwar xenophobia and the crumbling of the Wilson administration, produced a black-and-white struggle in which the attorney general quite simply placed the FBI at the disposal of industry. Liberals knew their place in that struggle, they were oppressed by no inhibitions, and they found all the philosophic and forensic ammunition

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they needed in the ideas of Voltaire and Jefferson.

But the world has changed considerably since then, and to many a democratic citizen today the concepts of the 18th-century libertarians no longer suffice. The propagandists for totalitarianism have shown how easy it is to turn the very arguments of the libertarians against them and to murder freedom in the name of freedom. Professional fighters for civil rights are divided today as they have never been before, and this, I think, is more significant by far than any actual repression so far introduced or contemplated. The sharpness of the differences that have arisen among liberals indicates that some assumptions casually and traditionally made in democratic circles require reconsideration in the light of new problems. Perhaps the best way to begin is to view these differences against the background of the issue that inspires them.

THE present issue, bluntly, is Communism. In a larger sense, of course, it is political totalitarianism of all sorts. In the days before the war the question of how to handle the Christian Front was more pressing than that presented by the Communists, just as the Mosley movement is the major headache for civil libertarians in Britain today. But this is not the moment for American fascists, who have had no spiritual—or financial—fatherland since the collapse of Germany (their turn will no doubt come again when and if we have a depression). The Communists, however, have for years been an increasingly troublesome problem to civil libertarians. It is not that anyone in his senses considers them a revolutionary threat to the republic, nor that they think of themselves in any such romantic fashion. Numerically they are insignificant, unable after thirty years to muster enough votes in New York State to retain their place on the ballot. But for all their weakness in numbers, and in spite of their remoteness from any revolutionary ambition, they are a source of untold mischief in a way that is unique in the history of this country and uniquely difficult for protectors of civil liberties to cope with. The several levels on which this mischief is carried out call for examination.

The Communists operate, to begin with, as a gigantic violation of the unwritten but generally accepted political counterpart of the Pure Food and Drug Act. That is, they depend for sales on false labeling. Except for full-time party functionaries, extremely few Communists ever present themselves as such. They are always "left-wingers," "progressives," or "democrats." Their schools are named not for Marx or Lenin or Stalin, but for Jefferson, Sam Adams, and Walt Whitman—men whose doctrines of political freedom could not survive five minutes in a Soviet classroom. And after years of persistent propaganda, the Communists have somehow succeeded in making thousands of otherwise sensible people believe that to call a Communist a Communist is sinful and a violation of his political rights; further, that it contributes to "red-baiting" and therefore "gives aid and comfort to the enemy."

Responding to this argument, many liberals have contributed to what amounts to a three-way conspiracy for muddying the waters of American political and cultural life. Hard-shelled reactionaries, exemplified by the Thomas committee, knowingly and purposefully lump together as Reds everyone from Eleanor Roosevelt leftward to William Z. Foster. The Communists, wanting nothing more than to pass themselves off as good honest democrats, are benefited enormously by being placed in the same camp with a sector of the population far larger than their own, more acceptable socially, and far stronger politically. The resulting confusion affords them a perfect cover. Where every progressive is painted red, who is to know the real Communist from the New Dealer, the totalitarian from the democrat? Thus the extremists on both sides are satisfied. But what do the liberals themselves have to gain from this confusion that they should go to such pains to increase it? The blunt answer is, ultimate extinction. By blurring the difference between themselves and the Communists, by fuzzily

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thinking of themselves as somehow joined with the Communists in a common cause, the liberals have allowed their institutions to be infiltrated bit by bit by those of a completely alien political faith; they have allowed their positions to be undermined and have thus unwittingly contributed to their own corruption.

If the Communists are a menace at all in this country, it is not to the government in any immediate sense but to the entire liberal movement, political and cultural, which they have until recently penetrated with such success. I say "until recently" because the utter intransigeance of current Russian diplomacy—and consequently of Communist policy here—has alienated many erstwhile fellow-travelers and made it more difficult for the party to work its will in popular organizations.

BEYOND this reliance on stealth and infiltration as political *tactics*, the Communists are distinguished from other American political groups by the very nature of their over-riding purpose. Indeed, it is this purpose that determines the tactics. I am not referring now either to their theoretical and ultimate goal of establishing a socialist order, which in fact plays almost no part in their activity, or to their objectives of the moment, such as the wrecking of the Marshall Plan and the defeat of Harry Truman. I mean, rather, the determined, methodical, utterly consistent and unvarying purpose of furthering the national interests of the Soviet Union. The evidence on this count is so overwhelming by now that not even the wilfully blind can any longer suggest that the faithful echoing of the Soviet line by American Communists is merely a remarkable coincidence.

Consider, as one example out of scores, the typical metamorphosis of the Communist-managed American League Against War and Fascism, established in 1932 to "stop the war machine," as the slogan went. When the Comintern came forth with the concept of the Popular Front in support of collective security, the organization, retaining the same management, simply became the American League for Peace and Democracy, dedicated to "stopping aggressor nations." Hardly had Molotov signed the Soviet-Nazi pact in 1939, with the full understanding that it would instantly free the chief of those same "aggressor nations" for action, when the League over here gave way to the American Peace Mobilization, which violently opposed American efforts to hinder Nazi aggression through conscription and lend-lease. And again when Hitler turned against Russia two years later, the American Peace Mobilization immediately dissolved itself and sent its members rushing into an all-out campaign in support of a war suddenly become democratic.

It would take a volume to set forth these "coincidences" in their overwhelming totality. But only the most simple-minded will require such documentation at this late date. For others it should be enough to refer to the constitution of the now technically defunct Communist International, Paragraph 21 of which reads as follows: "Those party members who, on principle, reject the conditions laid down by the Communist International are to be expelled by the party." The American party, with Stalin's blessing, officially withdrew from the Communist International in November 1939, when American legislation would have made it possible to prosecute its members, along with the Nazi Bundists, as seditious foreign agents. The move protected their legal position but has made not the slightest difference in their unwavering loyalty to Kremlin policy from that day to this. The Comintern itself was dissolved by Stalin in May 1943, primarily to combat German propaganda to the effect that the Allies were bent on bolshevizing the world, and to smooth relations with the Western powers during the war. Its subsequent revival, on a limited scale as an informational clearing house, was hardly necessary to keep the various national parties in line. It was not until the French Communist Jacques Duclos, with Moscow's approval, cracked the whip on the other side of the Atlantic that Communists here sud-

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denly discovered that their revered leader, Earl Browder, was a wrecker, reversed his whole policy, and cast him into the political night. Similarly, when Bulgaria's Communist leader Dimitrov appeared recently to be pressing too hard for a regional bloc of Slav states (which might at some future time challenge Russian influence in the Balkans) he was quickly called to task in *Pravda;* and just as quickly the Bulgarian party backtracked and explained that it hadn't meant a real bloc at all and that no such thing was necessary.

THE comparatively low ebb at which the Communists now find their fortunes in the United States—largely as a result of this blatant devotion to a foreign state—is no measure of the indirect influence they still exert over some liberal minds. The era of the Popular Front has left a legacy of concepts that are clearly still at work in the field of civil rights under discussion. It is a tribute to the skill, persistence, and truculence of Communist propaganda that many Americans have come to uphold certain "rights" that are not rights at all, and some of which make no sense in this or any other kind of political society. For example:

1. *The right of anonymity.* The idea here appears to be that to ask a man in public whether he is a Communist is a violation of the secret ballot, a breach of his constitutional rights, and, generally speaking, a blasphemy against the democratic faith. The reverse, of course, is true. Secretiveness and conspiracy are the essence of the tyrannical state, but are incompatible with the practice of democracy, whose life blood is the free and open interchange of ideas. To quote from Morris Ernst, a veteran champion of civil rights who now finds himself in conflict with his absolutist colleagues: "The marketplace of thought is no longer free when competitors may enter it anonymously and *fight* democracy while they hide under the cloak of democracy." Technically, the right of anonymity, so far from having a legal existence, is expressly denied in the whole system of enrollment involved in party primaries. To have a hand in the nomination of a Republican or Democratic candidate, a voter must declare himself an enrolled member of one of those parties, which he does by signing, in the polling booth, a declaration that he intends to vote the appropriate ticket in the ensuing election. Lists of these enrolled party voters are compiled, by district, and may be had for the asking, or for a small fee, at any Board of Elections. This does not prejudice the right to a secret vote, since no one is obliged to register by party. It merely assures that people who wish to identify themselves with a party to the extent of helping to choose its candidates will do so without concealment. (From none of these facts, however, is it to be inferred that a congressional committee has the right to question citizens publicly about their politics in the absence of a clear and legitimate purpose. Such a purpose might be the intention to propose germane legislation, but surely not to bring about a man's dismissal from private employment.)

2. *The right to belong to any and all organizations.* Not even the Communists have the effrontery to claim this on legal grounds, but they have so thoroughly intimidated and befogged the more vulnerable type of liberal mind that in certain progressive circles it is considered treason to democracy to exclude Communists from organizations avowedly dedicated to democratic causes. The argument is, first, that this is a form of red-baiting, the arch sin; second, that it divides the forces of "light"; and third, that once an individual or organization embraces the belief that you can't work with the Communists, he or it is headed straight for damnation and a spiritual affinity with the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith. From its founding a year ago, the liberal Americans for Democratic Action has been determined to keep out Communists for the simple and normally persuasive reason that their entire philosophy, not to mention their current political line, is utterly at variance with the organization's; and it is for this very reason that the ADA is damned by

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those liberals who are so steeped in the psychology of the Popular Front that such essential discrimination appears only as a kind of persecution. I once asked a confirmed fellow-traveler just how the Communist party would feel about admitting an ADA member in the impossibly hypothetical case that one would care to join. "That's entirely different," she said. "The Communist party has its own philosophy and long-range objectives"—a privilege evidently not to be credited to the rest of us.

Akin to this particular Communist claim is the insistence not merely on the right of free speech, which is certainly not contested here, but on the highly questionable "right" of an individual to speak at private gatherings of his choice, however unwilling they may be to hear him. New Yorkers may recall the recent instance of a Congressional candidate who had been invited to address a community house forum only to find the invitation canceled when the sponsors learned more of the nature of his political history and affiliations. The matter appears to have been bungled, and the organization would doubtless have done better to let its invitation stand. But the clamor that the candidate's right of free speech had been violated was typical of the specious approach made even to this most fundamental of all rights.

3. *The right to a government job.* That a person can be dismissed from government service in such a way as to prejudice his chances for making a living in private life is beyond denial. However, the manifest importance of establishing fair dismissal procedure—fair to the individual and fair to the government—should not be clouded by any question as to an individual's "right" to hold government office. Seth W. Richardson cleared the air on this point when he took over the chairmanship of the newly created Loyalty Review Board. "Legally," he said, "the government is entitled to discharge any employee for reasons which seem sufficient to the government, and without extending to such employee any hearing whatsoever. . . . We believe that the rights of the government in that respect are at least equal to those possessed by private employers." In this view, as has been pointed out by Arthur Krock, Mr. Richardson had behind him the force of a classic decision by the late Oliver Wendell Holmes, certainly no laggard in the protection of civil rights. Deciding the case of a policeman dismissed for political activity, Justice Holmes wrote: "The petitioner may have a constitutional right to talk politics, but he has no constitutional right to be a policeman. . . . There are few employments for hire in which the servant does not agree to suspend his constitutional right of free speech, as well as idleness, by the implied terms of his contract. The servant cannot complain, as he takes the employment on the terms which are offered him. On the same principle the city may impose any reasonable condition upon holding offices within its control." (McAuliffe v. the City of New Bedford, Jan. 6, 1892, Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.) Communists as well as liberals might well have pressed those words on the late Mayor La Guardia ten years ago when they were trying to get him to rid New York's police force of the Christian Front followers of Father Coughlin.*

4. *The right of revolution.* In support of this concept, advanced only in lofty theoretical circles, reference is commonly made to the Declaration of Independence, the works of English political philosophers going back to 1688, and a few key passages from Jefferson and Lincoln. In particular, it is recalled that Jefferson once remarked

*The criteria applied in the case of government jobs cannot, of course, be carried over to the field of private employment without opening the door to insufferable abuses and jeopardizing the whole structure of job security so painfully built up by the trade union movement. The complexities of the problem cannot be fairly treated here, but even with the most zealous regard for political liberty it is not sensible to expect a voluntary political, educational, or social welfare organization devoted to a particular purpose or program to retain an employee found to be actively engaged in subverting its aims and objectives. Yet this, too, has been asked in the name of civil liberties.

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that "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants"; and that on another occasion he invoked the Lord to "forbid that we should ever be twenty years without . . . a rebellion." I have no wish to question the self-evident truth, set forth in the Declaration, that "whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness] it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and institute new government." But while the Constitution provides the means of altering the government, it most assuredly provides no right to abolish it. No instrument of government does that, because no government can at any time contemplate itself in the role of a destroyer of men's "unalienable rights." Revolution is a right that men will of necessity assume if long enough subjected to tyranny, but it is a natural right stemming from the concept that government derives its power from the consent of the governed, and not a right *specifically conferred by the state.*

It is fatuous, therefore, and paradoxical for revolutionists to argue, in effect, that in order to prove itself democratic a government must share their view that it has become tyrannical and must conspire with them in its own destruction by facilitating their activity. The destruction of the government is an end they will have to accomplish strictly on their own power, if they are intent on doing so, and at the risk that failure in such enterprises generally entails. Washington, fresh from a revolution of his own, effectively nullified the right of Daniel Shays and his men to resort to armed rebellion, though they could have made out a good case for it. And Lincoln, for all his statements that whenever a people "shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise . . . their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it," nevertheless fought a bloody war to prevent just such dismemberment. It need hardly be pointed out, perhaps, that those who invoke the "right of revolution" here will often defend any degree of tyranny in other countries as a legitimate protection of the state against those conspiring to overthrow it.

RECOGNIZING the spuriousness of some of the Communist claims, sincere liberals nevertheless find themselves in a dilemma. They must steer a course between the hysteria whipped up by the Communists themselves, for purposes having little to do with civil liberties, and a repressive spirit in high places that can all too easily get out of hand. They remember the classic story of the naked Dukhobor pursued by the policeman. Finding himself handicapped in the chase by the burden of his clothes, the representative of the law proceeded to strip off his garments one by one and finally overtook his quarry—but by that time no one could tell which was the Dukhobor and which the policeman.

One might think that it was both possible and practical for the policeman in the story to rip off his jacket, if necessary, and perhaps even shed his shirt. But no, the absolutists tell us, once he begins the stripping process, it is inevitable that in the heat of the chase he will proceed to the ultimate. (Because boiling water scalds, one must not use hot water to clean a cut.) So it is that libertarians of this school prefer to let the "Dukhobors" run wild rather than risk the possibility that the state might reduce itself to their level in the course of pursuit. It is this same point of view that accounts for the insistence of Britain's Home Minister, Chuter Ede, on letting the followers of Oswald Mosley hold incendiary meetings in the East End of London—a mechanical balancing of the right of free speech for Mosley against the right of Britain's Jews to the security and dignity of their persons. So it was, too, that the Weimar Republic presented its head to the National Socialists on a swastika-decorated platter. And it is in this same spirit that Arthur Garfield Hays could say, only a few weeks ago: "We don't have to devise new ways of dealing with Communists. We have a piece of slang in this country—a catchphrase—that's older than Communism. It goes, 'Let the guy

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talk—it's a free country, ain't it?' That's good enough for me."

I am afraid it's not good enough for others of us who are as devoted to democracy as Mr. Hays unquestionably is. Perhaps it would be good enough if the Communists really preached what was in their minds instead of working deviously to pervert democratic institutions to the purposes of the Soviet Foreign office. New methods of dealing with the Communists *are* in order—and it is only by accepting this as a fact that liberals have even a chance to see to it that those new methods do no violence to the democratic values they uphold. Liberals must understand that the absolutist civil rights position presents a double danger: it fosters the growth of totalitarianism by a self-defeating tolerance and by virtue of that very growth it stimulates repressive measures from the Right, which, in turn, endanger the whole structure of civil liberties.

Freed of the self-imposed burden of opposing any and every restraint on the Communists, however unofficial, liberals might re-examine the "rights" claimed by Communists, separating the real from the factitious.

Conceding then, as many already do, that Communists not only have no "right" to government jobs but are in fact incongruous in the role of trusted workers for a government they have every desire to undermine and supplant, liberals might concentrate their attention on how to eliminate them without doing injustice either to the Communists in their capacity as private citizens or to innocent suspects. Denying the "right" of Communists to belong to other political organizations, liberals might the more readily defend the genuine right of Communists to maintain their own party openly and to speak freely in its name. Denying the "right" of the Communists to foment violence, liberals would be in that much better a position to defend the rights of all to advocate peaceable social change, however far-reaching. And finally, denying the "right" of anyone to propagandize without responsibility, they would be able to sponsor effective governmental curbs on extremist groups without injuring the fabric of democracy.

ONE such curb well worth considering is the "disclosure" plan put forward by Morris Ernst. This proposal calls for legislation under which all propaganda groups, of whatever political complexion, would be forced to publish the sources of their funds, their rosters of membership, and an account of their disbursements. It would strip the nightshirts from the Klan as well as the liberal mask from the Communists. "We make every company offering securities for sale on the exchange tell us all about itself," Ernst points out. "We make newspapers publish their ownership. Why shouldn't we demand as much from organizations which now operate secretly to sell ideas and mail great quantities of propaganda literature to the public?"

Why not, indeed? Far from impairing civil rights, such a law would steal the thunder from the demagogues. It would deprive the Thomas committee of the chance to harry individuals for the sake of headlines. It would make unnecessary such objectionable regulations as the non-Communist oath required under the Taft-Hartley law. It would obviate the danger of letting the Attorney General decide, on the basis of his own secret investigations, which organizations are to be considered subversive in the process of determining a government worker's loyalty. It would save countless innocents from joining front groups created by the Communists for their own purposes and controlled by them to whatever extent they deem necessary. And it would prevent cowardly groups from flooding the mails with unsigned printed matter calculated to stir up racial antagonisms—or signed matter, when it comes to that. The vice-president of a bank who now slips an occasional contribution to a Dilling or a Gerald Smith will tighten up if he knows that his dubious munificence is to be a matter of public record.

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THERE are legitimate objections, of course, to the Ernst plan, and its specific details call for some prudent investigation. It has been suggested, for example, that groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People would find it hard to collect contributions in Southern communities if the names of donors were to be publicized. Yet Walter White, its chairman, favors the proposal on the theory that the loss of a handful of supporters who do not want to stand up and be counted is a small price to pay for the elimination of thousands of enemies concealed in the sheets of the Klan. It is worth noting, too, that a slightly modified version of the Ernst principle was incorporated in the recommendations of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, which numbered among its members representatives of both the CIO and the AFL.

A more serious threat to liberty under the Ernst proposal is the possibility that an individual member of the Communist party—or of any other minority political group, for that matter—would find himself deprived of a livelihood by virtue of an employer's blacklist. In this way a conformity would be enforced that could conceivably wreck the whole system of political democracy. The policeman would in fact be indistinguishable from the Dukhobor. But Ernst's proposal, as he himself readily admits, might well be modified to the extent of dropping the requirement to report full membership lists. The purpose of disclosure would be amply served by publicizing the source of an organization's major contributions—say, anything over one hundred dollars a year—together with full lists of officials, and a detailed account of expenditures. Front organizations would find it difficult to thrive under such restrictions, and the scurrilous little movements on the extreme Right would find their financial streams rapidly drying up.

It will be argued, of course, that even this degree of compulsory disclosure is a breach in the wall of our liberties—indeed, Mr. Hays has already said so—but this is to assume that there is such a wall of absolutism in the first place, when obviously there is no such thing. The Post Office has no hesitation in barring obscene matter from the mails, citizens are not free to spread the word that a bank is about to close its doors, nor is it considered an exercise of freedom of speech to yell "Fire!" in a crowded theater when there is no fire. More pertinent, there is a law on the statute books of New York State even now making it mandatory for organizations that require an oath to file periodic statements with the government revealing their constitutions, by-laws, membership rolls, and lists of officers. And it would merely add to a long list of postal regulations to forbid quantity mailings that do not bear the sender's full name and address. Whatever its technical flaws and its need for modification, the Ernst plan suggests the kind of constructive measures a democracy can take for its own salvation once the discussion of civil liberties is cleared of the fog of absolutism.

THE obvious truth is that there can be no complete freedom short of anarchy. Everyone wants as much liberty for himself as possible, but the rational citizen realizes that his liberty must be curtailed at the point where it harms others or serves to curtail *their* liberty. The essence of the matter is not only to find that point of equilibrium, but to realize that this point *shifts*, depending on the political and economic health of a state, the complexity of its society, and the degree to which it faces an external menace. The fullest measure of liberty will normally be found where there is the greatest degree of social stability, which must be the prime objective of civil libertarians if they are not to operate in a vacuum. If in the achievement of that end, adjustments in political freedom must be made, they must assuredly be made with the greatest caution and without violence to the basic principles of a democracy—but caution need not mean paralysis.

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CONVERSIONS

A Story

CLAUDIA MARCK

FOR weeks after I came to France—I arrived just before my tenth birthday—I would, walking on a street, lift my arm to my forehead and, after a second of contraction, drop it again. Nothing would have been easier than to extend that raised arm. My muscles, I felt, would respond with terrifying ease; but, in an inevitable trajectory, that arm would drop in a clumsy half-circle from my forehead back to my side. I wanted to make the Nazi salute on a street in provincial France, and dared not.

When I became a Nazi—insofar as this was possible for a Jewish girl of eight years, living in a profusion of fairy tales and rock candy—I had already been converted on numerous occasions. This innate desire to take for myself and share whatever seemed most important in someone else's life ranged all the way from a treacherous admiration for wooden coffee mills—our own was made of glass and china—to a yearning to go to the park and sit, on sunny Sunday afternoons, with the shoemaker's family on the crowded green lawn. But most of all, I wanted my friends' religion. In that I achieved quite a measure of consistency. Because my best friend, the shoemaker's daughter, was Protestant, I once found the courage to declare to a group of the Catholic relatives of our maid that, in spite of them, I should become a Protestant and not a Catholic. And somewhere I even heard a strange, dimly muttered approval from someone's aunt. I was right, she must have declared, because look at poor Erna . . . she became a Catholic and never could quite understand it herself.

Protestantism, however, was associated only with a long red church (rather apart from the streets that I liked), a glossy textbook which Lottel had shown me, and with the sailor suit she wore on Sunday mornings when I could not play with her. But Nazism brought dolls and flags, hundreds of brightly-colored insignia that sold at street corners—only in school could one get the more stable, hexagonal swastikas—parades, salutes, and marching songs. Nazism belonged to our teacher who had us write narratives of old German mythology. To the young music teacher also. He wore a uniform, grabbed me by the back of the neck, and called me Marianne. It also seemed the special privilege of two little uniformed boys in our class, and of a girl named Isabel.

I could never precisely recall what my relations with Isabel were—two facts only have remained. The first one does not trouble me. Even if a careful search of our trunks and boxes should not yield the little blue book where all my classmates signed their names along with some verse or wish for the future, I still could see Isabel's small handwriting at the top of a page that then stayed blank, and discern, in the declaration from Hitler that she had copied down, the words, "Iron hopes and holy anger." Bright words. And there is brightness and white light also in the other memory, but all I can see (on the wide avenue close to the stationer's and the baker's shop) is Isabel's back in a grey coat—just as if I were peering at her from the corner of our own leafy and tawny street, not standing, as I should, in front of Isabel,

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CLAUDIA MARCK is a young writer born in Breslau in 1925. She attended school in Germany and France, and later received her bachelor of arts degree from Barnard College. From Barnard, Miss Marck was awarded a fellowship to attend the Sorbonne, and later enrolled at the University of Prague, where until recently she was a student. This story, which contains autobiographical elements, is her first published work.

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and watching her speak (maybe words like the ones she wrote in my book—but suddenly I feel that it must have been something like, "No, you cannot be a Nazi, too") or salute, flashing down at me, for a second, immeasurable tallness and cold splendor. Lottel was standing apart. She may have become a friend of Isabel.

With Lottel, and with pennies hoarded from my daily allotment for chocolate milk at the ten o'clock recreation, I founded the treasure. That was after we (my grandmother, Kaga the maid, my brother, and I) had moved from the house where Lottel's father was shoemaker and janitor, and from the street with the chestnut trees, into a large old apartment house that my grandmother owned in the center of the city. The house had a terrible, dark, catacomb of a corridor which led to the back stairs—and those we had to use—and an old wild garden. The garden where we had lived before was light (the only dark spot was a heap of cool wet playing sand in a corner) with a wide lawn and two small hills that, of themselves, created most of our games. The city garden had no such light or logic. A small side area with a paved walk, a brick wall, squares of radish that we had planted, and some always unexpected, never plentiful strawberries, were all that had been humanized. The rest was thick, translucent weeds; the soil between their roots was heavy and black. On the uncut lawn there were dry and long grasses around a thin pear tree with three large green pears that could never ripen for fear some one might take them. In the back, huge broken chestnut trees.

In one of the adjoining gardens there once appeared a boy (I fell in love with him when he told me he was going to Palestine the next day, and hated him when I found out that he had not left—he laughed at me) and in the other garden—it was stony and narrow—lived a girl named Brunhilde. She terrified me, for her hair was sickeningly yellow, her skin very white, and her father, a gardener, was said to be seventy years old. I once hit her when she said in the street that my mother, who had been away for more than a year, went to China only to avoid being sent to prison. She lived in a sort of basement, and put sugar on her buttered rye bread. That too was hideous, and made me run away.

I do not think Brunhilde ever knew about the treasure. It was located in the hollow made by an unused cellar door and the step that went down to it from the garden. We covered it with a wooden board. There we placed a corkscrew with an ivory handle, a bottle of red ink stolen from my brother, some large matches with blue and yellow heads. Moreover, by cautious maneuvers, I had approached a girl in class who, for some mysterious reason, sold paper pads, and finally bought two of them.

We visited the treasure once every week—on the day Lottel came home from school with me and stayed until evening. We lit a fire with dry leaves in the back of the garden. Once we took some sheets from the pad, some matches, and, with the red ink, painted large swastikas on them. There was a staircase running down into the garden from a porch behind which lived two inimical old maids. We placed the painted sheets on that staircase. I wonder whether there was a complaint and whether I lied. After all, a Nazi youth group used the garden once a week for meetings. Then the garden door was locked. But our chief desire was to buy a knife for the treasure—a folding knife with a red handle. That, we could never do. And the ivory corkscrew was purely ornamental.

In the house (upstairs) I openly read old German legends, and once brought home a photograph of Hitler to put on my wall. I said it was a handsome photograph. My grandmother objected on the grounds that, on your wall, you should only have pictures of people that you love. I said I did love Hitler, although I remember that, in the private accounting and classifying of loves that I held in bed before falling asleep, he usually occupied a place at the bottom of the list. But he was included. My grandmother rather avoided speaking of him. As for Kaga, she

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would wonder aloud why, with all the power he had, Hitler did not give himself some nice respectable title—duke or prince. I had not bought that photograph, however. It had been handed to me—and to every child in school—along with a bun, a sausage, and an apple. Hitler was visiting the city.

I used to think that I had been a hypocrite for the first time—not just told some small premeditated lie, but briefly and completely concealed my emotion—on a day, not long after that, when, walking on the Boulevard des Brosses, mother told me that I had not come to France for the Easter vacation only, that I would never go back to Germany. I now believe that I laughed and laughed, and told mother—secure that this was only a nice compliment—how good it would be to remain with her in France, and that my laughter just continued for a second more, carrying me over the first pain.

After a few weeks, I no longer tried to make Nazi salutes in the street. I forgot about the treasure and the red swastikas—or, rather, they became the hidden core around which less direct memories formed: blue candles sold in winter for the benefit of Germans living abroad, harvest-thanksgiving parades, songs that had been sung when we marched from school to the park while I was out of step. Anyway, I had a new conversion, and could soon cross myself nimbly, though perhaps in the wrong direction. Besides, I became a girl-scout with a uniform—it also happened to be brown—and I could raise my three fingers in salute.

BREAK OF DAY IN THE TRENCHES

ISAAC ROSENBERG

THE darkness crumbles away—
It is the same old druid Time as ever.
Only a live thing leaps my hand—
A queer sardonic rat—
As I pull the parapet's poppy
To stick behind my ear.
Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew
Your cosmopolitan sympathies.
Now you have touched this English hand
You will do the same to a German—
Soon, no doubt, if it be your pleasure
To cross the sleepy green between.
It seems you inwardly grin as you pass
Strong eyes, fine limbs, haughty athletes
Less chanced than you for life,
Bonds to the whims of murder,
Sprawled in the bowels of the earth,
The torn fields of France.
What do you see in our eyes
At the shrieking iron and flame
Hurled through still heavens?
What quaver—what heart aghast?
Poppies whose roots are in man's veins
Drop, and are ever dropping;
But mine in my ear is safe,
Just a little white with dust.

ISAAC ROSENBERG was one of the best-known British "war poets" of the First World War. He was born in Bristol in 1890. In 1915, he enlisted in the army and was killed in action in France on April 1, 1918. This poem is reprinted from his *Collected Works*, published by Chatto and Windus, London, 1937.

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SOUTINE: "DEDICATED TRADITIONALIST"

1894—1943

ALFRED WERNER

WHEN the painter Chaim Soutine failed to turn up after the liberation of France, many of us believed that he had shared the fate of another artist of Jewish origin, the sculptor Moise Kogan, who had been deported from France and killed by the Nazis. Reporting on an exhibition of Soutine's paintings at the Galerie de France, a French newspaper said: "It is known that, hunted as a Jew by the Gestapo from 1941 to 1943, he died under dramatic circumstances in August of the latter year."

A letter from Paris, dated September 2, 1944, confirmed the news of the artist's death. But the circumstances of his death remained a mystery until October 1945, when Jacques Guérin, an old friend of Soutine's and the owner of thirty-five of his paintings, came to New York and told this story to the staff of the Museum of Modern Art:

It is true that Soutine died in August 1943, but he died a natural death. During his last years he had lived in a small town, Champigny-sur-Veuldre (Indre et Loire), southwest of Paris. He had never been molested by the Nazis, for whenever the SS came to Champigny he was warned in advance by the natives and hid in the countryside until the Germans departed. However, he had long been suffering from stomach ulcers, and, his condition growing acute, his friend Marie-Berthe Aurenche (former wife of the painter Max Ernst) took him to a hospital in Paris where he died at the age of forty-nine.

Abnormally self-critical, Soutine had destroyed a great deal of his own work, but he did leave fourteen of the best paintings of the last two years of his life to Mme. Aurenche, who subsequently sold them to private collectors. M. Guérin paid her 440,000 francs for a small painting of a grandmother and child, and 300,000 francs for a small painting of a child in a tree; these, according to M. Guérin, were the pictures that Soutine liked best of those he painted in his last two years.

Obviously, Soutine has not been forgotten since his death. Exhibitions of his work have been held in Paris, London, New York, Boston, and other places, and an increasing number of people show curiosity about the personality of the man himself. However divided art critics may be in their opinion of his accomplishment, no one can deny that of all the strange people who have set foot in Montparnasse or Montmartre, the late Soutine was one of the strangest. Numerous anecdotes are current about him, and legends have been woven around his name. To judge from the reports of people who knew him personally, he was not only an eccentric, but also an unusually kind man. Above all he was a sincere artist in a time and an atmosphere in which artiness flourished, a recluse separated by a gulf of idealism from the brutal commercialism and intrigue of the art industry.

ALFRED WERNER was born in Vienna in 1911 and studied literature at the University of Vienna. He was editor of *Gerechtigkeit*, an anti-Nazi weekly, and *Die Stimme*, a Jewish semi-weekly, and he has published several volumes of poetry and literary criticism in German. After spending six months in the Dachau concentration camp, he left Germany shortly before the outbreak of the war. In this country Dr. Werner has been an editor of the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* and the *Chicago Jewish Forum*. He has contributed to various American magazines including the *Nation*, the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and the *American Scholar*.

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SOUTINE was born in 1894 in Smilovitchi, Lithuania, then part of Russia. His boyhood was infinitely sad. East European Jews who aspired to art had to overcome all kinds of obstacles to achieve their goal. Because of an all too rigid interpretation of the Second Commandment ("Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image"), Orthodox Jewry abhorred the idea of a Jewish artist. But even more emancipated Jewish fathers preferred to have their sons become lawyers or physicians rather than *Kuenstler,* good-for-nothings, starving in a garret. Naturally, in large cities the opposition to art was somewhat weaker than in out-of-the-way towns. Soutine had the bad luck to be born and brought up in one of the latter.

The elder Soutine, a small tailor in a forlorn little town, was probably not so much of a monster as the artist's biographers portray him. He was determined to make his son a shoemaker and he considered the pursuit of art either blasphemous or *meshugge,* or both. Nor were his views on paternal authority and corporal punishment unusual in his circle. (The sculptor Jacques Lipchitz, in an interview published in *Partisan Review,* Winter 1945, asserts that Soutine's parents were professional beggars who beat their son because he did not want to beg; but this is not confirmed by the biographies of Soutine written by George Waldemar and Elie Faure.)

As a child, Soutine, who had probably yet to see a work of art in Smilovitchi, had one burning desire: to possess a pencil with a red and a blue point. Finally he stole a small kitchen utensil from his home, sold it, and with the few kopeks he received bought the dream pencil. His furious father thrashed him and locked him in the cellar. Chaim also went about defacing the town with peculiar, incomprehensible drawings, and in the end he was thrown out of school as a dunce. He did not mind, for his only passion was to draw. He drew the village idiot, his first portrait. Sure of himself, the boy approached a white-bearded, venerable Jew and asked him to pose. Invited to the old man's home, Chaim was attacked and severely beaten by the patriarch's sons for having dared to approach their father after portraying an idiot. The beating sent Chaim to the hospital and his mother threatened to sue the assailants. They had to pay her twenty-five rubles in settlement.

When he was fourteen, Chaim ran away to Vilna, the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," sanctified by the memory of the Gaon Elijah. But for him Vilna's chief interest lay in its art school. The preliminary examination he took to gain admission revealed that, artistically speaking, he was completely illiterate. But one of the professors recognized the boy's natural aptitude for drawing and managed to have him accepted. Attending school during the day, Soutine earned his living at night as operator in a movie theater. Three years taught him all he could learn at this school; luckily he then found a patron, a physician who appreciated his talent and zeal and furnished him with money to go to Paris.

SOUTINE arrived in Paris in 1911, at the age of seventeen, and went to study under Fernand Cormon, an old academic painter. To keep himself alive, he copied old masters at the Louvre with paints "borrowed" from other artists and on rotting canvases bought at the "Flea Market" for a few centimes. He became an admirer and friend of the unhappy Modigliani, who was ten years his senior, and the two of them shared a filthy garret in Montmartre that contained only one cot, in which they slept by turns, the other fellow resting on the floor in the meantime. A famous portrait of Soutine was painted by Modigliani on the panel of their door, "Modi" not being able to afford a canvas. It was later removed and sold.

After Modigliani's death in 1920, Soutine moved to Ceret in the Pyrenees, where the kind-hearted proprietor of a bistro gave him credit on his sketches, although he certainly could not appreciate them. Having seen some of his works and heard of his dire misery, Leopold Zborowski, a Polish poet

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and connoisseur who had helped Modigliani, drove to the village with Paulette G. and asked her to fetch Soutine from the bistro. "But how will I recognize him?" the girl asked. "Don't worry," he answered. "Pick out the dirtiest tramp you can find, and that will be Soutine."

The Pole's devotion to the artist was touching, particularly since the latter, though essentially kind-hearted, could become rather difficult at times. Zborowski sold some of Soutine's paintings for him, particularly to a collector named Guilleme. In 1923 Guilleme brought Dr. Albert Barnes of Philadelphia to visit Zborowski and he bought a hundred of Soutine's pictures.

There are many stories about Soutine, but one in particular should be told here. Inspired by Rembrandt's famous "Carcass of an Ox," Soutine bought a side of beef and hung it in his studio, where he kept it until it began to putrefy. He watched the changing colors of its decomposition with enthusiasm. His fellow-tenants complained about the smell, and when Soutine refused to dispose of it they called the police. "We'll do our best for you," said the officer, who sympathized with the crazy artist. "We'll send you a veterinary to give the meat a few injections that will stop the disgusting decay." "No, no!" cried Soutine. "That would change all the beautiful colors." It seems that the artist won the last round, for the result was one of his masterpieces, *"Boeuf écorché,"* a stupendous feat of color now in this country.

During the 20's Soutine lived successively at Ceret, Cagnes, and Paris. Subsequently he stayed frequently with Monsieur and Madame Castaing, patrons of the arts, at their chateau in the neighborhood of Chartres, southwest of Paris. Eventually his financial success permitted him to purchase a modest villa at Montrouge, outside Paris, where he lived "in extreme simplicity, offering asylum to refugees from all parts of Europe," as his friend, Michel Georges-Michel, who visited him there before the outbreak of World War II, has told us. Although the poverty of his early years was now over, his dealers still profited more from his art than he himself did. And to the end he remained a shy, unobtrusive man who preferred solitude and never sent his works to the big exhibitions in Paris.

He seems rarely to have been satisfied with himself. Friends and art dealers who visited him saw him hack some of his own canvases to pieces.

A slender man with an emaciated face, he ate little and drank only water, in order, as he put it, not to vitiate his spirit. He read a great deal, and loved Baudelaire, Poe, Gogol, Rimbaud, Flaubert, and, above all, Dostoevsky. Among the painters he preferred were Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Courbet, and Cézanne. Strangely enough, he detested Van Gogh, despite the similarity of their work. It is odd but perhaps profoundly just that Lipchitz should term Soutine a "dedicated traditionalist of the purest vein." (One day the sculptor met him on the Pont des Arts in Paris, with a roll of paper under his arm. "We barely exchanged greetings, when he asked me excitedly: 'Do you want to see the thing I like most in the world?' He unwrapped a reproduction he had just bought in the Louvre of Fouquet's portrait of Charles VII.")

PEOPLE will tell you that Soutine was an *Expressionist,* a *Frenchman,* and a *Jew.* Albert Barnes has asserted that the Expressionist movement owes more to him than to anyone else. Yet others have pointed out that Nolde, Pechstein, Kokoschka, and other German modernists had developed its features while Soutine was still an art student at Vilna. Both parties agree, however, that Soutine was one of the major figures of the movement.

As for his being French—he came to Paris while still in his formative years, and spent two-thirds of his life in France. His master, Cormon, was French; Soutine absorbed French technique. From Daumier he learned to simplify and distort and from Cézanne he learned color. He never left France, and all of his landscapes depict its beloved soil.

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Nevertheless, there was something indisputably foreign about him. Think of the French master most closely related to him—Rouault. A critic once remarked that although both Soutine and Rouault seem haunted, there is an essential difference. Rouault conveys the atmosphere of a man haunted by things of the mind, while Soutine sees the world as carnal. In Rouault's visions there is an intellectually recognized fear; in Soutine's there is the intuitive dread of the uncertain, the amorphous, with a threat of bleeding, twisted flesh.

Bleeding, twisted flesh—many of Soutine's pictures seem an anticipatory reaction to the fate of the people he left behind him in Eastern Europe. The late Soutine was unwilling or unable to throw off his greatest burden—or advantage—his Jewish heritage. It is significant that all who wrote about him, Gentiles and Jews alike, are fascinated by the Jewish qualities of his art; although his subjects, whether persons, landscapes, or still lifes, were never Jewish in themselves. Elie Faure said that Soutine had the look of a fugitive (*allure fuyarde*). Maurice Sachs, who watched him walk in the garden of Monsieur Castaing, wrote: "With his bent back, his drooping shoulders, his rumpled hair, his worn trousers, Soutine seemed to belong to no century in particular; he had the appearance of some mournful Jew who, concealing his fine, pale hands, was fleeing to the security of the ghetto" (*Creative Art*, December 1932).

"They [Soutine's works] are the expression of a neurotic who is saturated with the savage, childish mysticism of his Hebrew heritage," wrote the American Jewish artist and art critic, Morris Davidson. "The frenzied rituals and superstitions of his Jewish environment in Vilna have left in him a morbid urge to express his emotional fancies by means of distorted figures. . . . Soutine is more poet than painter, and most of all, high priest of the synagogue." René Huyghe, curator of painting at the Louvre, wrote in his introduction to *French Painting: The Contemporaries*, that Soutine "towers over them all [the French Jewish painters]," stressing the "violent distortion," the "violent struggle with reality, a tortured reality" in his work. "From Van Gogh and Vlaminck and Rouault he takes the passionate vitality, at war with the elements of reality; from his race, for he is also a Jew, he inherits the sadness, but he transforms it, and to its tragic resignation he desperately reacts, ravaging the world and abandoning it like a piece of metal, twisted and fused by the flames."

All such statements have to be taken *cum grano salis*. It is doubtful whether such things as the "Expressionist," the "Frenchman," and the "Jew" exist in any clear form in the realm of art. "Intermarriage" in the realm of art is a more common phenomenon than in everyday life. And yet the Palestinian artist, Rubin, did not talk Hitler's language when he explained to me: "Jewishness in art is not as esoteric or as superficial a quality as some people believe it to be. . . . The artist's approach, his emotions, are Jewish, and he translates them into lines and colors. Just as one recognizes Hebrew script as different from, say, Latin script, the public will eventually recognize the 'handwriting,' the craftsmanship of a Jewish artist as Hebrew art." This has nothing to do with racial mysticism; it is the pressure of the present world and of history that makes the Jewish artist look at the world in a special way.

Many observers will call Soutine's pictures "repulsive." They prefer the kind of "art" supplied in the illustrations of the "slick-paper" national magazines. They see everything on Soutine's canvas as broken, twisted, distorted—and they are repelled. Or they fear that the artist is just ridiculing them, or that he is a blasphemer for whom nothing is holy. On the other hand, there are those who "agree" with him because of what they wrongly consider his "cutting sarcasm."

NONE of these reactions does Soutine full justice. He was neither a hater, a blasphemer, nor even a sarcastic person. He simply did not believe in the traditional

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Greek concept of art; he saw the dread, the frenzy, and the things beneath the epidermis—the pinched wretchedness of the baker boy, the uneasiness of the school girl, the gusts tossing and tearing the branches and foliage of an old tree. He omitted details, and used strong, sensuous, almost orgiastic colors, which George Waldemar called "a torrent of lava foaming in stormy billows." It is the contrast between the contorted, "unnatural" forms and the juicy, life-stressing colors that contributes the essential character of this art. A battle is being fought between mind and matter, idea and reality, and the artist is honest enough not to patch up a "compromise" but to emphasize the eternity and the hopelessness of the battle.

EVEN those who, like Thomas Craven, resent Soutine's work, admire his sincerity. To Mr. Craven, Soutine's painting is "the antithesis of art," while on the other hand Albert Barnes once wrote enthusiastically, "Soutine is a far more important artist than Van Gogh." The truth is probably somewhere between the extremes. In a few decades Soutine may be taken for granted by the very same people who now refuse to look at his pictures, just as their parents abhorred Gauguin or Van Gogh. He already has a strong following among such American artists as Darrel Austin, Arbit Blatas, Hyman Bloom, Jack Levine, and Abraham Rattner. What his fellow Europeans think of him was aptly expressed in the previously quoted interview Jacques Lipchitz gave to *Partisan Review*:

"He was one of the rare examples in our day of a painter who could make his pigments breathe light. It is something which cannot be learned or acquired. It is a gift of God. There was a quality in his painting that one has not seen for generations—this power to translate life into paint—paint into life. . . .

"His work at first glance seems anarchic, chaotic; but nothing could be further from the truth. . . . His work was very uneven, but his successful canvases are sublime. For those who like painting rich in thick, luminous impasto, Soutine is the greatest modern master. You can eat his pictures by the spoonful. They are not all completely realized, but in spots he has the strength one finds in Rembrandt, the life one finds in Rubens. He breathed into his pigment; his work is radiant with light . . . . Modigliani, shortly before his death, could say to Zborowski, their dealer: 'I leave you one heritage—this man of genius . . . .'"

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MUNICH UNIVERSITY: CLASS OF '50

A Case Study in German Re-Education

J. GLENN GRAY

THE sound of a wood-saw filled the winter air as I left the Ludwig Strasse and entered the grounds of the University. Students were reducing cordwood piled inside the main corridor into shorter lengths that would give some degree of heat to such classrooms as were left undestroyed by bombs. These men did not look like university students. Their ages were uncertain, not readily guessed from their faces. Their clothes were nondescript: parts of uniforms, worn civilian suits, carpenters' aprons, headgear of all shapes and sizes—except for the jaunty student caps of earlier times. There was no gaiety, no laughing or shouting, but hunched against the bitter January wind that cut through the university quadrangle, they worked silently and joylessly like laborers who wait for the end of the day.

Those Americans who have sentimental attachments to the grounds of the Ludwig-Maximilian Universitaet should avoid renewing them. Official reports have it that the University is approximately fifty per cent destroyed, but aesthetically the destruction is practically total. The imposing entrance from the Ludwig Strasse, with its large fountain, is a shambles, and inside the quadrangle the great Aula is demolished from a direct bomb hit. The library is now a dark basement room on the right side of the square. Only those lecture halls facing on the Amalien Strasse are comparatively intact, but exterior damage gives them, like everything else at this largest and most famous of South German universities, a comfortless, forbidding appearance. Place names have been changed once again since Hitler's demise, and one reads Sophie and Hans Scholl Platz, Huber Platz, etc., in memory of the University's newest martyrs, the seven who fell in the Student's Revolt against the Third Reich in 1942-43. Nowhere does the eye find a spot which is as it was, a pleasant corner to remind one of the past.

I used to climb the cold, grimy steps of the administration building and pass down the roofless corridor, where the mud-coated floor made it necessary to step from one brick to another. In the anteroom of the rectorate where I held weekly interviews, a group of students waited to see me. They stood up, removed their hats, and bowed in the stiff, ceremonious manner of Germans before a "superior." The rectorate was unheated and I did not remove my overcoat. In some mysterious fashion the secretary arranged the order of interviews. For two hours they followed one another and at the end of the period there were always many persons turned away. The requests were numerous and varied. To most I had to say "no" in one form or another, "no" throughout the whole year that I acted as control officer. But I tried to hear their laments to the end and to obtain some insight into the character of these young German men and women.

WHEN I first began these interviews in the fall of 1946, I found it difficult to pene-

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THE core of the future of Germany lies with the minds of the Germans; and it is being increasingly recognized that the question of democratic re-education in that country is a crucial one. Here, J. GLENN GRAY, who was Military Government's education officer for Bavaria in the year 1946-47, offers a representative case history, in his description of life at the University of Munich, with its social and human implications. Dr. Gray was born in Mifflintown, Pennsylvania, in 1913, earned his doctorate at Columbia University in 1941, and is now assistant professor at Haverford College.

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trate the closed, expressionless faces which so many Germans wear like a mask. I suspected they concealed hostility and dark revengeful thoughts. But wider experience taught me that behind most of these masks lies only blankness: no hatred, little thought, only animal needs, and a blind groping after anything offering the slightest promise of a personal future. In philosophy of life, in matters of religion, in politics and social questions, the majority are quite neutral. The color of their convictions is gray, like life itself in most corners of Europe at present. What do convictions matter today? The things of significance are: When can I finish my studies? How can I manage to pass my state examinations? Where can I obtain that book? How do I get wood or coal for my room—food, clothes, money? How can I help my mother in the Russian Zone? When shall I be able to emigrate? Shall I be forever pestered with that accursed membership in the Hitler Youth and the Studentenbund? Why did I ever accept a rank in the Bund Deutscher Maedel? Can they hold such a minor rank against me?

As these young men and women slowly recover from the intolerable strain of the war and the shock of Germany's total ruin, there are some signs that they are painfully beginning to reconstruct their world of values. But the awakening is slow; the past has taught them to be wary and suspicious of credos; and the daily struggle for life in the bomb-jungle of Munich leaves little time for reflection. Consequently, it is idle to conclude very much about the political beliefs of students in Munich or, I think, in any other of the universities in the American Zone. They are in large part still unwon for one ideology or another. A few are convinced and struggling democrats, some are unrepentant Nazis or nationalists, a handful are Communists, but the large majority are neither one thing nor the other. They have not yet had time or opportunity to make up their minds.

Their confusion and the ambivalence of their feelings can be seen in their attitude toward anti-Semitism. Of the elected student leaders to the postwar Student Council, at least two are half-Jewish and are generally known as persecutees. The same is true at the Munich Institute of Technology, where the president of the Student Council, one of the few student leaders known throughout the American Zone, is a Jewish persecutee. By virtue of character and personality they have persuaded their fellow-students to elect them, though persecutees as such are generally unpopular at Munich and throughout Germany. None of these Jewish students would claim that they have met with hostility in university circles because of their origin. Yet all would instantly deny that anti-Semitism has ceased to exist. Only their personal talents have put them beyond its reach for the time being.

One of the most popular of Munich's professors is an émigré Jewish scholar recently returned, Professor Erich Kauffman of the law faculty. He, too, assured me that he had met no sign of anti-Semitic prejudice among faculty or students, though he had no doubts such prejudice existed, particularly among the latter.

One of the Jewish students at Munich made a simple experiment. In lecture halls, he would sit beside girls and try to elicit their personal interest. Being an attractive youth, that proved not to be difficult. But when he revealed to them that he was Jewish, immediately the girls drew back, almost in fright he reported, and were, from that time on, friendly enough but definitely not interested. His explanation for their behavior was that these girls, remembering all too vividly the misery those women who married Jews had been exposed to in the Third Reich, wished to avoid similar complications. They did not trust their fellow countrymen or a future government to protect them.

ON ANY given day, a sizeable proportion of the people desiring to see me were not students at all, but those wanting to matriculate. I was their last hope. They

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had stood in line for hours, day after day, before the doors of the appropriate officials in charge of matriculation at the University and at the Bavarian Ministry of Culture; they had tried this or that bit of influence through a faculty member—all to no avail. Of me they begged only a sentence on a slip of paper, stating that I had nothing against their enrollment. Experience had taught them that a word from an official of Military Government could work wonders in changing the attitude of their fellow Germans behind the desk.

Many of these petitioners actually deserved more consideration than they got. Some needed only one or two semesters to complete their work; they had families to support and were physically unfit for anything other than intellectual work. But in the first two semesters after reopening under the occupation, the University, lacking both administrative machinery and foresight, had overcrowded all the colleges with first comers, and now could take only the smallest fraction of those clamoring at its doors. In 1939, with facilities intact, the enrollment was about 4300; at present it is more than ten thousand. Nearly seven thousand were refused admission in each of the two semesters during 1946-47, with only a few hundred accepted.

Most persistent of these candidates were the former regular army officers, the Hitler Youth leaders, and party members. In their case the American control officer had a negative selective role in the sense that he had to determine who among them were objectionable to Military Government. Our directives actually barred only those members of the officer class who had obtained the rank of colonel or higher, but these directives also enjoined careful screening of officers in the lower ranks. Of Hitler Youth and Studentenbund leaders, those who had attained commissioned status were automatically excluded, but matriculation officials, after the first wave of uncritical admissions, had become cautious in admitting any who held Hitler Youth rank. As for party members, there was a stipulation that not more than ten per cent of the total enrollment at any time may have belonged to the NSDAP.

These excluded students and would-be students are a problem to be reckoned with, not merely by the University, but by a future German government and the occupation authorities. These young, falsely-indoctrinated Germans cannot be won to new forms of life simply by barring them from all educational institutions. On the other hand, it is obviously unwise and unjust to admit large numbers of them to the University: unwise because their collective weight might well choke the growth of a more liberal spirit there; unjust because they would be taking places away from uncriminated students.

More dangerous than the Hitler Youth leaders and the party members are, in my opinion, the former career officers. They are seldom politically compromised, because political membership and activities were not permitted in the armed services. Now robbed of a career that most of them chose voluntarily in the 30's, they seek to qualify for some profession which will save them from physical labor. Many of them have not the intelligence to justify a university course. Long years in professional military service make them even less likely to be won for democratic ways than the young ex-Nazis.

Furthermore, many former conscripted soldiers show strong resentment at the presence in classrooms of such officers. Yet they press upon the admission gates most insistently, sometimes arrogantly, and demand to know why they should not become students, being tainted with no political guilt.

American education officials, convinced that Germany's militaristic spirit is even more deeply rooted than the National Socialist ideology, have pressed for stringent directives to control these career officers. So far, their pressure has been ineffective. The purification courts charged with enforcing denazification laws do not reach any but the comparatively few who are guilty of

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war crimes; all others receive the "not affected" cards. Informed German opinion will tell you that though many of the young Nazi leaders now believe that they followed false gods, the majority of professional officers regard the present merely as a waiting period of uncertain duration until they can resume their former careers. This element obviously requires the closest watch, to make certain that they gain little influence in public life.

AMONG my petitioners who were matriculated students, many came to plead the cause of dismissed professors. A denazification wave had hit the University in the middle of the winter semester and hundreds of students suddenly found themselves without any means of finishing important courses or taking examinations. In many cases the students were not informed of their professor's incriminating acts, and were, anyhow, not too concerned about his past. They thought only of the stored knowledge in the professor's mind which they needed to advance their careers, to enable them to rescue some of the lost years of their youth. Most were too fearful of an American official, too uncertain of their ground, or perhaps simply too demoralized, to state their complaints; they had heard of too many professors being dismissed and then shortly reinstated without explanation. Often they came in delegations, with long petitions signed by hundreds of students, the preambles of which pleaded in exaggerated phrases of respect that the august Military Government re-examine the dismissal of this or that professor.

It must be candidly admitted that a number of these dismissals required re-examination. I agree with Franz Neumann (COMMENTARY, June 1947) when he asserts that the universities should not have been reopened until the task of denazification had been completed. Before its reopening in the Spring of 1946, a large part of Munich University's staff was dismissed, almost wholly on the basis of questionnaires—the famous *Fragebogen* where memberships in all major and minor Nazi-affiliated organizations had to be listed. When the unreliability of this method was demonstrated, Military Government reinstated a number of the dismissed staff members, or permitted German officials, who were given authority under the denazification law, to reinstate them. Then, as newly recruited education officers and Special Branch agents became aware of the past writings and activities of various professors, a new wave of Military Government dismissals came during the fall and winter of 1946-47. Without consulting the German authorities or the professors in question, they summarily dismissed thirty-three full professors and some fifty-odd instructors and assistants at the University of Munich alone. A large number of others were placed under investigation, but were allowed to continue teaching on a temporary basis.

The effect of this eccentric denazification has been crushing. Some professors have been in and out of office as often as three times in three years of occupation. All have been made uneasy and uncertain of their status, no longer convinced that the verdict of their own purification courts is significant, and fearful of what new rules will be promulgated. They are also aware that with all the denazifications, the University still has politically undesirable elements in comparison with whom many of the dismissed are "lily-white." Apart from these individual injustices, some of which are probably unavoidable and in the long run not so important, the havoc wrought on the student body by this inept policy is obvious. Until we can adopt a less arbitrary method of determining who is to teach, and can insure these young people some continuous instruction, however poor in quality, we have hardly begun the vital task of educational construction.

THE importance of this was constantly impressing itself upon me. I recall a girl who came to see me about a dismissed professor. She was a serious, sad-eyed medical student, whose poised and quiet manner

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set her immediately apart from the ordinary student.

"First, if I may, a word about myself," she said. "I am part Jewish and my father was active in the Social Democratic party before 1933. My mother died in a concentration camp. The same fate befell my uncle. I also spent a short period in one of those institutions. My whole family suffered systematic persecution, partly because of their race, chiefly because of their liberal political views. This, just by way of orienting you and perhaps convincing you that I have no interest in defending a Nazi.

"I come in my own name, representing in reality no one (though all the medical students are of the same mind), to speak for our anatomy professor whom you took away from us. We cannot understand it. I happen to know this professor personally outside the classroom. He is a friend of our family. As you know, his wife is also Jewish. I know what you have against him—that he was for a short time in the SA and perhaps a candidate for the party. But have you taken into account that this man was persecuted in the Third Reich, was thrown out of the SA in 1934 and knew no moment of security until the end came? Do you realize that he is beyond any doubt one of the genuine liberal democrats on this faculty and was never in his heart anything else? I do not speak of the fact that he is a remarkable teacher and a scientist of reputation and distinction. That does not matter to you, and I understand why it should not. It does, however, matter to us who are students, who have enormous difficulties today and to whom he represents our only means of learning the basic facts about anatomy. There is no replacement for him. Since we do not have the necessary books, there is no possibility of recovering what we lose. However, this is an argument which I am ready to give up. I know that our universities must be rid of National Socialist influence. I think I am as interested in that goal as you. But in getting rid of this man, you are depriving the University of Munich of a genuine anti-Nazi, a man who is on your side. Somehow I must convince you of this fact."

There was no question of her sincerity and honesty. Though I had nothing to do with the commission that had investigated this case and ordered the removal, I had informed myself of the circumstances, and felt constrained to defend the action.

"You must recognize," I said, "that we are trying to introduce the reign of law once more into Germany. For twelve years you were ruled by a regime that lived above the law. You know the consequences. Of one consequence you are perhaps not so keenly conscious as you should be. That is the fact that in these years the German people have come to regard all government as a rule of men instead of law. They try to live without recourse to law, but by recourse to special influence and personal contacts. Your professor was teaching here in disregard of the German Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism. As a former SA and party member, he was subject to that law and yet he had done nothing to legalize himself."

This answer, the general force of which she recognized, did not satisfy her. "Is it not true that you would have removed our professor, even had he been legally employed, purely on the grounds of formal early membership, without any reference to what he really believes or what kind of man he is in his heart? I know how difficult it is for you Americans to discover the truth about us Germans," she continued. "No one is a Nazi nowadays, everyone is busy denying everything, protesting his innocence, showing what a bitter opponent of Hitler he was. It must really make Americans distrustful and cynical. In the end how can you believe any of us? But there must be some way to find justice. You must find some of us who are beyond suspicion and distrust, some who were here the whole time and who really know what the people were. Such mistakes as you are making must be avoided."

"There is no way of denazifying justly,

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so far as I know," I answered. "There are only two possibilities. Either we start from a formal principle and judge according to membership in the party and party organization. Of course, this is very often unjust, since many firm Nazis were not in party organizations and many who were party members were in no sense Nazis. Or we try to judge according to inner conviction. This too brings injustice, for who can judge what a man is in his heart? Only he himself can do so, and we know how few Nazis stand ready to convict themselves. Do you think that your committee of trustworthy Germans could arrive at a unified opinion about the real Nazis and the non-Nazis? It is too much to hope or expect."

"Yes, it would be hard," she admitted, sorrowfully, "but still a way must be found. Otherwise we shall all become embittered and perish. Absolute justice is not to be found, but relative justice to a degree that we do not have today must be. Otherwise the future is hopeless."

"I can only quote you the well-worn lines of Schiller," I answered, "The very curse of an evil deed is that it must continue to engender evil.' "

But as the girl arose to go, dejected and discouraged, I had to recognize that my reasoning, correct and formal as it was, was not satisfactory. A closer approximation to justice must be found. The seeds of guilt and evil must not forever be replanted and tilled. The sins of the fathers had already been visited, and will continue to be visited, upon such students as this one. But to add needless suffering and to tolerate avoidable injustice would be to jeopardize the last hope and faith which these young people have. The grain of faith in young German hearts is too valuable. On its survival and growth much of the future depends.

ONE almost universal academic experience of the post-war world is also shared at Munich. Any professor there will tell you that the one enjoyable feature about his teaching is the students' thirst for knowledge, their unbounded eagerness to take in everything that is said and, in spite of their great lack of factual knowledge, their surprising maturity. The long years in an impersonal, spirit-baiting army machine have given the veterans among them time and opportunity to value the pursuit of knowledge. And for the non-veterans, the impossibility of an education at home during the war years appears to have had a similar effect. In some of the Munich lecture halls the press of students is so great that the professor has to speak from the *Katheder* with students an arm's length away. In the bitterest winter weather the classrooms were largely unheated. Both professors and students kept on hats and overcoats throughout the lectures. To a visiting American the impression left by these groups is not lightly forgotten. They testify to a fortitude in the pursuit of learning which many believed to have been almost eradicated from the German character.

Student living conditions further test that fortitude. Rooms are often bare and cheerless beyond description and, worst of all, located in the less destroyed outskirts of the city, necessitating a long daily ride on the packed street cars. This physical fact of distance gives them little opportunity to learn to know each other or to carry on any of the extra-curricular activities and interests which do much to create a university community. The *Mensa* is likewise no help in this respect. Only a fraction of the students can obtain meals there; waiting lines are long and eating shifts are timed. Neither the quality nor quantity of the food, nor the location of the *Mensa* in the cellar of a destroyed building, predisposes the students to sociability. The whole external aspect of this once famous university as well as the appearance of those who populate it remind the observer more of a badly-destroyed factory than of an institution of higher learning.

As Germany's hoarded food stocks are exhausted, more and more students find it necessary to resort to the black market. For the refugees among them and those away from home, there can no longer be any

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question of living on the official ration. Some use their money saved during the war to purchase cigarettes (recently quoted at 120 marks per package on the black market) which they can barter for food. This usually demands long trips into the rural areas on foot, since German police are on the alert for such practices. Naturally, these conditions encourage the heartless and parasitic element: the pseudo-student who uses university matriculation as a cover for black market operations is a common phenomenon.

WHAT about the professors? Those who have escaped dismissal and the loss of their livelihood are physically better off for the most part than the students. Except for the newly appointed, they have their friends and connections in Munich and consequently ways of supplementing the food and fuel rations. Those whose homes have not been bombed or requisitioned have their private libraries where they can meet seminar students to whom they often loan out books. Unhappily, only a small percentage of the advanced students get an opportunity for such close contact with their professors. The distance between student and teacher is in most cases great; and no professor knows more than a handful of his students—those not intimately. It is not too much to say that the two live in separate worlds.

Because the majority of the teaching staff is old, they have grown to maturity in a social and cultural environment different from that of their students. Their interests are largely academic and scientific and the events of the past years have helped to drive them more and more inward. With the exception of a few active and convinced Nazis at Munich, not many gave assistance to the past regime. But fewer still resisted it with fervor and courage. The majority went through the motions, joined some of the organizations as passive, paying members in order to be let alone. To have their books published, some did written obeisance to the Fuehrer, usually at the beginning or end of their treatises, the location most accessible to party sycophants. Though German universities varied a great deal with respect to their allegiance to National Socialism, the worst that can be justly said about Munich is that its professors have been fatefully isolated from the social movements of the past decades. As a faculty, they tend toward an unreflective conservative nationalism today, as they did in the Third Reich and under the Republic. But they cannot be said to cherish even this tendency seriously. How often did I hear the refrain from many academicians at Munich: "I have never concerned myself with politics!" And it was not difficult to detect a note of pride in that confession, as if to say that the scholar who did have time to meddle with such messy things was of an inferior sort.

After observing these men in senate meetings, listening to them in lecture halls, and speaking to them as a guest in their homes, I am convinced that this estrangement from the everyday world—what the Germans call *Weltfremdheit*—is their common dominant characteristic. Their work must be supplemented in some way, somehow, by younger, aggressive, socially awakened teachers who will reach the students at their own level. For the German student has no ivory tower to enter, and the pursuit of knowledge is bound up for him with the search for a supportable future in a shattered, highly problematic society.

There is little in the present catalog of course offerings at Munich which takes account of modern needs and problems. In the liberal arts school, emphasis is still on classical studies, plus Egyptology and Sinology. The English department concentrates on Shakespeare, Milton, and the Romantics; the psychology department on courses in character types and analysis, outdated material largely philosophical in content. Political economy offerings are chiefly of a technical nature—on business administration, geography, forestry, and the like. Almost totally absent are courses in sociology, social and political theory, international law, modern history—fields of study which

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directly or indirectly help to produce a responsible social consciousness.

THE rector, Professor Georg Hohmann, a distinguished orthopedist, agreed that something had to be done to liberalize this curriculum. Accordingly, at several senate meetings in 1947 he took the initiative in advocating courses in general education for all faculties, aimed at giving the students some sense of the chief problems in all fields. A *Dies Academicus* was instituted, an Academic Day once a week on which all other courses were suspended and lectures were delivered on general themes presumed to be of common interest. Under the pressure of professional objections that this program left inadequate time for specialized instruction, the *Dies Academicus* was shortened to a half day per week. In a recent semester, the University chose the general theme of politics, with various professors from all the faculties endeavoring to throw light on this theme from the standpoint of their fields. One of the main lecture series is on the Weimar Republic, about which present-day students know little.

How successful this experiment will be it is impossible to predict. Apart from the major difficulty of finding competent lecturers, the cherished German tradition of the students' elective freedom appears to be a stumbling block. Professors and students alike are opposed to compulsory attendance at such lectures—indeed at any lectures—and they are likewise opposed to requiring examinations in these courses. Traditional academic custom allows the student to choose whatever lectures and subjects of concentration appeal to him, a tradition all the more jealously guarded after the experiences of the Third Reich. To expect students who have lost so many years and are desperately concerned with specialized competency to concern themselves with a liberal education is to be overly sanguine.

A distinct step forward in the liberalizing of the University's structure has been the elimination of traditional discrimination against Jewish professors. Even under the Weimar Republic, few Jewish scholars at Munich, or elsewhere, received full professorships unless they changed their faith and were baptized. Under Military Government, this old pattern has been broken. A few émigré Jewish scholars, some of whom never had any connection with Munich University, have returned to join the staff. Most of them are performing yeoman service in the remodeling of German education and at the same time helping to change attitudes instilled by the Third Reich. If the comments I have heard are worth anything, they are causing more Germans to feel the unspeakable shame of the past years than any number of atrocity pictures.

ON THE larger problem of bringing the University into closer relation with the community and drawing it away from its self-imposed isolation, the rector and a few others have made a beginning. Alarmed at the rush upon certain schools, notably the medical school, which accounts for nearly 50 per cent of Munich's ten thousand students, the University has made contact with the Bavarian Medical Association in an effort to determine approximately how many physicians can be profitably trained for the future. There is widespread fear of an "academic proletariat," unemployed intellectuals who would be fertile material for social unrest and revolution. Similar studies of future needs have been urged upon the Bar Association, the Economics Ministry, and other professional associations. Estimates in all these fields are naturally rendered fluid by the present division of Germany. For example, there is a great shortage of physicians in the Russian zone and inadequate numbers are being trained there. But it is anybody's guess as to whether doctors from the American zone will be allowed to practice there. However, the working relationship that has been established between the professors and their lay colleagues is a step in the right direction.

To meet the challenge of the new burdens that postwar Germany imposes on

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the graduate, the University has just formed a *Curatorium* or advisory board, whose members will be drawn from representatives of fields other than the academic—unions, bar associations, business men, government officials, and the like. The function of this board will be to offer constructive criticism of courses, suggest new fields, and in general to modernize the curriculum. This American-sponsored reform is being handled cautiously by the University senate, which wishes to reserve the right to name the board and insists on its purely advisory character. There is widespread suspicion of American intentions and a persistent belief that we wish to lower the scholarly level of the University. Though there are protagonists of the modernization program, the weight of opinion among the older element of the faculty is against it. They oppose particularly the filling up of their decimated ranks from competent outsiders, young men of promise from the business world, the law, and government. These professors wish to reserve university precincts for the academically trained, the classically educated, and those able to pass the test of the qualifying essay, complete with all the footnotes.

Here lies the kernel of at least one, probably the chief, educational problem today. Are German universities to continue to be staffed with those whose interests are purely scholarly and scientific, teaching subject matter appropriate to "eternal values"? Or are they to be gradually transformed into functional and experimental institutions, sensitive to current affairs and aware of their responsibility in the development of social attitudes? Is the university to be regarded as primarily an oasis for the pursuit of truth and scientific research, or is it to have the wider pragmatic role of serving more immediate interests as well? At present the forces intent upon preserving the traditional role predominate, because the teaching staffs and the education ministries are weighted with age and conservatism. The American impact is naturally on the side of the newer functional role.

On the other hand, it cannot be said that there is entire unity of purpose on this crucial matter in the education branches of Military Government. Two educational philosophies exist there side by side as here at home, the one insisting upon a democratization of higher education with emphasis on method and general courses, the other persuaded that university training is within the competence of only the intellectually gifted minority, who are able to deal with abstract ideas and pursue technical investigations. The divergencies of these schools of thought have been pointed up by the recent report of the President's Commission on Education.

Protagonists of both philosophies are very active in Military Government and make their differences of opinion known to the Germans. Moreover, the radical reforms brought about on the Russian side of divided Germany, specifically by opening university doors to members of the laboring class regardless of secondary schooling, are also playing a role. As the tension between East and West continues to mount, those favoring the wider function for German universities in the American zone sometimes find themselves suspected of leftist heresy. It is, therefore, impossible to guess how effectively traditional patterns will be altered at Munich and elsewhere. All depends, in one way or another, on the larger political issue.

The student body is as yet on neither side. As the students awaken from the searing blows of the war and the defeat, they reveal a tendency to be bitterly critical of their professors and their Education Ministries. But they are no less critical of the American Military Government. On all the essential problems of their future, they are, as we have indicated, as yet undecided. One is often gripped these days by the conviction that the final, decisive battle for Germany was not waged three years ago on her borders, as the newspapers of the world alleged. It is being fought in the hearts of Germany's students with such inadequate forces as we possess. And the outcome is in deadly doubt.

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ADEN AFTER THE RIOTS

Report on a Middle East Portent

NORMAN BENTWICH

THE charred shells of the burnt-out buildings of the Jewish boys' school and girls' school along the main street of Crater (oldest part of the colony of Aden and in fact the crater of an extinct volcano) are a symbol of the destruction which last December befell one of the oldest Jewish communities in the world. The "knife-rests" and the barbed wire entanglements, placed each evening at all the entrances to the Jewish quarter, mark the relapse into medieval ghetto insecurity of a community which for a hundred years has enjoyed British citizenship.

The British colony of Aden—located in southwest Arabia—is a hundred years old; but the Jewish community of Aden goes back to the earliest dispersion of the Children of Israel. In the Middle Ages, Benjamin of Tudela, that greatest of Jewish travelers, told how the Jews of Aden were not subject to the yoke of the Gentile. But today the Jewish community of four to five thousand lives almost entirely in the crater, in a section of six streets, of which two have names, and the others are known impersonally as A1, A2, A3, and A4.

The houses are built in solid blocks, back to back, without a sign of courtyard or garden; and the blocks are separated by "sweepers' passages," for the clearing of refuse. Most of the Jews have their shops and stores along the main roads that border the quarter, and in the bazaar which they share with Arabs and Indians. A few wealthy families have their stores in a different part of the town, in the section commonly known as "Steamer Point," where the big ships land their passengers.

IN THE riots that broke out suddenly last December 2 after the decision of the United Nations in favor of partition in Palestine, and following an appeal of the Arab League for a three-day strike of protest in all Arab countries, over eighty Jews were killed and as many seriously wounded. Fourteen Jewish houses were burnt to the ground, and many more were looted. Of one hundred and seventy Jewish shops and stores, over a hundred were burnt or looted and the two Jewish schools were burnt out.

It is alleged that the greatest part of the casualties was caused by the military force, the Aden Protectorate Levies, which were called in by the civil authority when the police were unable to deal with the mob. The Aden Levies are composed of Arab tribesmen with British and Arab officers. It was apparently asking too much for them to take firm action against Arab looters attacking Jewish houses and shops. They soon turned to take an active part themselves in the looting and shooting of Jews.

A Jewish quarter in the neighboring township of Sheikh Othman was destroyed at the same time, and all the Jewish inhabitants, including four hundred and fifty Yemenites waiting to go to Palestine, had to be evacuated to the camp of Yemenite Jews.

NORMAN BENTWICH has had a distinguished career in both public service and the academic world. He was born in London in 1883 and was appointed, in 1912, inspector of courts at the Egyptian ministry. Following the establishment of the British mandate in Palestine, Professor Bentwich served as attorney general in the Palestinian administration. In 1932, he became professor of international relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is the author of numerous books on philosophy and Jewish affairs. They include: *Philo Judaeus of Alexandria* (1910), *Josephus* (1914), *Ahad Ha'am and his Philosophy* (1927), and a biography of Solomon Schechter (1938).

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This camp now accommodates over three thousand. Lying in the sandy desert, it was formed two years ago when Jews from the Yemen waiting for their visas to Palestine so increased in numbers that they could no longer find a place in the town. At the Yemenite camp itself, there was no serious incident—perhaps because there was nothing to loot.

A party of British sailors from two destroyers, which had been hurriedly summoned to Aden, were able to take over the patrolling of the Jewish quarters on December 4. When on the morning of December 5 British troops, who had been flown from the Canal Zone in Egypt, arrived, the violent part of the riots had come to an end. After this grave outbreak at the beginning of December, a few serious incidents occurred later in the month; twice the military authority took over responsibility from the civil administration. But a further attack on the Jewish population was averted. A British military force has remained in Aden, and a part of it is stationed in Crater.

MR. BARNETT JANNER, M.P., visited Aden on behalf of the British Board of Deputies in January and helped the community to reorganize itself and to prepare its claims for compensation. The shock of the riots had been very deep, and several of the community's leading members had fled from Aden. With Mr. Janner, Mr. Viteles of the Joint Distribution Committee of America visited Aden, and brought material help for the refugees and the Yemenites in their desert camp. He was also instrumental in bringing in two young Palestinians for educational work in the camp, and he has found for the community in Aden itself a doctor, a trained nurse, a head teacher for the boys' school, and an administrator.

It was announced in February that the British Administration would hold two inquiries: one into the causes of the riots and the measures to be taken to prevent a further outbreak; the other into the damage suffered and the claims for compensation. The commissioner in the first inquiry was Sir Harry Trusted, who was formerly Attorney General and then Chief Justice of Palestine, and afterwards of Malaya. It was agreed that the Aden Jewish community should be represented, and the writer went out to Aden on behalf of the Anglo-Jewish Association to help in the presentation of the Jewish case. A magistrate of the Aden Administration has conducted the second inquiry; and Mr. A. Diamond, who is also on the committee of the Anglo-Jewish Association, went out as counsel on behalf of the Jewish claimants.

Sir Harry Trusted knows all about riots and civil disturbances, and the inquiry once it started was conducted with great expedition. Besides the Jewish representatives, the Arab community, the government of Aden, and the British forces were represented by counsel. Some fifty witnesses were heard: government officers, British and other civilians, Jews, Arabs, and Indians. The proceedings were semi-public; the seven non-official members of the Legislative Council, who include three Arabs, two Indians, one Jew, and one Englishman, were present throughout the proceedings.

It is likely that the report of the Commission will not be published for some time. It will be submitted in the first place to the Governor of the colony. Then it will be passed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and only when he has considered it, and decided on the action to be taken about the recommendations, will it become a public document. In the meantime, the Jews are gradually returning to normal life and activity. Nearly five hundred claims for compensation have been presented, and the government is paying forthwith the smaller claims which are approved. It is also providing food for those who are still destitute.

THE riots have attracted the attention of the Jews to this neglected community of the East. The two schools that were burnt down in the riots were founded by members of the family of Messa, which in the last generation was the wealthiest and

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most powerful in the community. The buildings were modern but the educational standards were not high. Only the head teacher in the boys' school had any academic qualification, and only a small number of the boys continued to the government secondary school. The community has not produced a single physician or a single lawyer, and scarcely any qualified teachers.

Paradoxically, the Yemenite camp in the desert is a more hopeful place than the Jewish quarter of Aden. Its habitations are like those of the Children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai—booths (*sukkahs*) of matting. The camp is directed by a remarkable woman doctor, Olga Feinberg, originally from Russia, who worked in Palestine among Arabs as well as Jews for many years. Her home in Jericho was destroyed during the Arab revolt in 1938, and she went out to India. During the war she did fine service in India, and then, returning to Palestine in 1946, by an act of providence stopped off at Aden. From that time she has been administrator, doctor, and universal provider for the growing community, which increases by nearly one baby a day. The Joint Distribution Committee of America provides for the feeding in the camp, for the medical supplies, and other elementary needs.

The spirit of Palestine has been brought into the camp and gives it life. A few *shelichim* from the Halutz movement, two of them Aden-born but trained in the Yishuv, are spreading among the young and old a knowledge of Hebrew, the history and geography of Palestine, the socialist way of life, and the Zionist achievement. They are also teaching the Yemenites to sing and dance the songs and dances of the Yishuv.

It is an amazing community, these three or four thousand Yemenites and Adenites, crowded into a few acres, surrounded by barbed wire and holding their schools and their classes in the huts where they eat and sleep and learn. (Happily they have no need to fear cold and rain.) Compared with their habitations, the camps of the DP's in Germany are splendid mansions. Yet a spirit of hope and of preparation dominates everything. More than half of the inhabitants are young people below seventeen years of age. But the adults as well as the youth and children have the thirst for knowledge of Hebrew and of the way of life of the Yishuv. It is quite exhilarating to hear the classes shouting together: "We will come to the Land though we may tarry on the way," reciting the story of the *Bilu* [a group of Jewish students who emigrated to Palestine in 1882], repeating the doctrines of Rousseau, or chanting the songs of the return as they used, in their synagogues in the Yemen, to chant the verses of the Bible.

In the established community of Aden, too, the urge is growing to migrate to Palestine, especially among the young people. You find them gathered in a dark upper chamber, drinking in the new gospel from one of the Halutzim.

Yet it is to be hoped that a number will stay in the old outpost of Israel. When the Palestine Jewish navy begins to sail the seas, Aden may become a Jewish as well as a British maritime station; and this community, which has lived for centuries with the Arabs and has Arabic as its native language, may be a link with the Orient. Aden Jewry, having passed the ordeal of fire in the tragic happenings of last December, may with the help of British and American Jewry be fitted by better education to take a full part in the life of the colony and to play its part also in the expansion of the Yishuv in the Middle East.

On the other hand, the Yemenites, who are waiting in the camp, should be transferred to Palestine as soon as immigration is open. They cannot be absorbed into the colony, which is already overpopulated, they will not return to the Yemen, and their one hope and faith is to get to the Jewish National Home and to take their part with the forty thousand Yemenite Jews already there in productive work.

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THE MONTH IN HISTORY

DISORDERS FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC

Omens for November—The Latins—Palestine

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

Collapse of a Coalition

MANY times since the end of the Civil War, the Democratic party had seemed on the verge of disappearing. Never, before 1932, had it succeeded in attaining the status of a majority party. Even its two successful candidates, Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson, had secured only pluralities. Its only secure support had come from the Solid South, and from the machines in certain Northern cities. The latter had seldom been able to carry their states, and indeed the cities themselves had often been unreliable in national elections.

But the combination of an unprecedented depression, a magnetic personality, and unrivaled skill as a political tactician had enabled Franklin D. Roosevelt to cement a coalition which elected him twice with overwhelming majorities. And a world war had made it possible for him to hold it together for a third victory, and then a fourth.

The forces that had rallied behind Franklin Roosevelt were in part the same ones that Andrew Jackson had united a century before. Urban industrial workers, the poorer farmers, and Southern planters had followed Jackson in his attack on the "money power."

But it was doubtful that even Andrew Jackson's coalition would have been adequate to seize and hold power in the 20th century. For in the interim the United States had become in large part a middle-class country; the industrial workers were, on the whole, a minority even in the cities, and the proportion of small farmers in the nation had been steadily falling. Basically, the power of decision now rested with the commercial middle classes and the white collar workers who shared their mores and attitudes. It was in this group, its security shattered by the Great Depression, that Roosevelt found his most ardent followers. For them, neither class interests nor acceptance of principles weighed as heavily as did their psychological need for reassurance. And this the personality of Roosevelt supplied. (To many of the same group—and to others, also, since insecurity was not confined to one section of modern society—a similar function was performed by the certainties of the Communist party. Hence it was with genuine enough enthusiasm that many of that party's adherents joined in its Roosevelt worship after Teheran.) But an alliance cemented together by the force of a personality, and lacking either a common program or common interests, was essentially impermanent.

IN TIMES when the month-by-month march of events is of such a character as to give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the thankless but necessary task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM has had many years of experience as a news analyst, and brings to his work of appraisal here a rich store of knowledge in modern history and international affairs. The judgments expressed here are, of course, those of the writer, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

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Whether, had Roosevelt lived, he could have kept the coalition alive through another four years, was in the nature of the case uncertain. The farmers of the Middle West had already begun to drop away well before his death. In the South, there had been loud rumblings of discontent in 1940 and 1944, and they had seemed likely to rise further by 1948. Even labor and the liberals had shown signs of impatience with the failure of Dr. New Deal to rise again after it was clear that Dr. Win-the-War's task had been accomplished. And of course the question of whether the Communists would have continued more Rooseveltian than the President, or whether they would have again discovered —as they had in 1933 and again in 1940—that he was leading the country toward fascism, was one that could not be answered without knowing whether the "Great Experiment" of giving Russia all she asked would have been continued.

But however probable the breakup of the coalition had Roosevelt lived, it became almost inevitable with his death. For Harry Truman was not a man to inspire multitudes with blind devotion, nor had he become, through the catalysis of great events, a symbol capable of transcending the boundaries of interest and ideology that divided men. Fundamental clashes that Roosevelt had held in check, to some degree and for a time, now began to demand decisions.

The Rebels

The defection of the Communists was certain from the moment American policy began to clash with that of the Soviet Union. Rebellion in the South, however, had seemed unlikely when Mr. Truman first assumed office. The Southerners regarded him as one of themselves, and expected him to take a conservative position on economic issues and—at least tacitly—a Southern one on racial questions. In both respects, he disappointed them. In the economic field, to be sure, he proposed no startling innovations. But he did, even if half-heartedly at times and not with complete consistency, fight a rear-guard action against the removal of controls on business and their imposition on labor. And he resisted somewhat more steadfastly the efforts of those who wished to alter the country's fiscal policies so as to lower the proportionate burdens of the rich.

But if Southern Democrats frequently found themselves voting against the President on economic questions, their differences with him were on details rather than basic principles. And the questions were not charged with the emotional content necessary to disturb the political ways of the South.

Any step toward the realization of racial equality was, however, another question. The Democratic party in the South had maintained its monopoly on political life by virtue of the single issue of "white supremacy." This had been the battle-cry with which it had recaptured control from the "Black Republicans" after reconstruction, and with which it had successfully undermined the Populist rebellion. The race question defined the limits within which a Southern politician had to operate. He might blatantly make it his stock and trade, or more genteelly give it his tacit adherence. On other issues, he might be reactionary or progressive or even "radical." But on this issue, he had no choice if he wished to retain his place in political life.

For a long time this Southern attitude had presented no problems to the national Democratic party. On the one hand, the doctrine of states' rights—reinforced by a series of Supreme Court decisions designed primarily to protect business from federal interference—afforded an easy answer to any Northern liberals who might be unhappy about the "peculiar institutions" of the South. On the other hand, there were few Negroes in the North, and those who were there were assumed to be faithfully wedded to the Republican party. Hence the administrations of Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson were both marked by the introduction of new limitations on the rights of Negroes in the South, and in both cases the federal government collaborated at least tacitly in the process.

During and after the First World War, however, hundreds of thousands of Negroes moved North. They became a political force capable of deciding close elections in a number of the most important states. It was no longer possible for the urban Democratic machines of the North to disregard them. And when, through the WPA, the majority of Northern Negroes were finally convinced that they had more to gain from the Demo-

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crats than from the Republicans, they pressed vigorously within the Democratic party for federal action against racial discrimination. At the same time, the Supreme Court, in the course of adjusting the Constitution to the realities of modern economic life, expanded the powers of the federal government sufficiently to remove the legalistic basis for its policy of non-interference.

Under Franklin Roosevelt, however, the issue did not assume an acute form. Negroes, by and large, contented themselves for the moment with improved treatment—still far short of equality—in questions of federal employment and economic assistance, and with public expressions of good will. Not until the war did discrimination in private employment and in the armed services receive serious attention, and even then most Negro leaders were willing to postpone the issue in the name of national unity.

But after the war, they clamored for equality of status as the corollary of the equal sacrifice which had been demanded of them. And, forced to choose between their demands and the prejudices of the South, Harry Truman took his stand on the side of freedom and equality. It was this which the Southern politicians found unforgivable.

Had Truman possessed the dramatic flair of a Roosevelt, he might have presented his decisions on both foreign policy and racial equality in such a manner as to win him more supporters than they alienated. Had he possessed Roosevelt's skill as a political tactician, he might have blanketed them with crises in other directions, so that the excitement they aroused would have quickly evaporated. As it was, however, he took his stand clearly enough to make its opponents his own, but far too quietly to win himself the support of those who approved his decisions.

It was this political ineptitude, more than any of his actual policies, which was primarily responsible for the coolness non-Communist labor and liberals felt toward the President. To be sure, he had proposed the conscription of labor during the railroad strike, and he had signed a bill abolishing portal-to-portal pay and otherwise weakening the Wage-Hour Act. But Franklin Roosevelt had also advocated the conscription of labor. And in any case, the unions were ready to forgive and forget all such transgressions in view of Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act. But they did not wish to support a candidate who seemed bound to lose the election.

As for the liberals, their enthusiasm for Truman had always been exceedingly restrained—less because of his policies than because his appointments seldom came from their ranks. But they had been ready to support him as long as he seemed a likely winner. As soon as the United States withdrew its support from the partition of Palestine it became obvious, at least in New York and Washington, that Truman stood no chance to win. Hence the organized liberals, grouped in Americans for Democratic Action and the New York Liberal party, began spontaneously to discover that they could not support Truman for re-election.

But they had already committed themselves to the thesis that the Republican party could not possibly have anything to offer. At the same time, Henry Wallace and his Communist supporters were anathema to them; and they had opposed the setting up of a non-Communist third party on the ground that it would split the progressive forces.

The machinery of the Democratic convention would almost certainly be in the President's hands, despite the revolts of Zionists and Southerners. Moreover, if by some miracle a knockdown fight in the Democratic convention were to result in the choice of a candidate other than Harry Truman, the resulting bitterness seemed almost certain to assure the nominee the fate of John W. Davis in 1924. This seemed likely to be true even if the President were to withdraw and leave an open field for his would-be successors. For the forces attacking him would find it difficult to find common ground with one another on any other subject.

The Southerners were faced with a similar dilemma, if in a somewhat less acute form. They could desert the President, but only at the cost of electing a Republican. And the Republicans were as firmly committed to a civil rights program as Mr. Truman himself.

Eisenhower?

In these circumstances, both groups of rebels turned to General Dwight D. Eisenhower as a candidate who could rally all factions and a majority of the electorate as

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well. His opinions on political questions were not sufficiently clear to antagonize any large group, he had great personal charm, and his status as a victorious commander endowed him with an aura of authority that many Americans had missed since Roosevelt's death.

There were, of course, certain drawbacks to the Eisenhower candidacy. He had already refused in no uncertain terms to run, and there was no indication that he would change his mind. It was possible that some of those now using his name were counting on his refusal, and merely hoped to create a situation in which the President would find it necessary to withdraw and leave an open field for some other candidate. (One who was mentioned in this connection was Supreme Court Justice William Douglas.) Others—particularly Democratic bosses in such areas as the Bronx—had apparently resigned themselves to the loss of the presidency and sought merely to free themselves and their local tickets from the handicap of Truman's name. Still others really believed that Eisenhower was accessible to a draft, and that Truman would yield to popular sentiment and facilitate it.

Certainly Eisenhower did not act as if he were planning to change his mind. Not only did he reiterate that his first refusal still held good, but, before a congressional Committee, he testified—as he could easily have avoided doing—in favor of the continuation of segregation in the armed forces. This reassured the South, but it completely alienated any Negro support that the draft movement might have hoped to acquire. And while it did not alienate the liberal and labor leaders of the draft movement, since their support of Eisenhower seemed to rest more on a desperate desire to be on the winning side than on any considerations of principle, it certainly embarrassed them.

Perhaps Eisenhower's resistance was based on an acquaintance with American history. Military heroes who had become presidents had often had cause to regret their acceptance of the office. Even Washington had ended his term amid the violent abuse of the Jeffersonians, no longer the hero of all the nation but rather the figurehead of a faction. But the most horrible example was the case of U. S. Grant. In many respects there was a notable similarity. Like Eisenhower, Grant was a professional soldier who had never taken part in politics. But he had been sought after by both parties, and rejected a Democratic draft before he finally yielded to a Republican one. In his time, too, the American people had been confronted by a rapidly changing world which undermined their traditional concepts. In Grant, the general who had saved the Union, they saw a protector not only from their real perils but from their ill-defined anxieties. So great was their need that, even after two terms of the worst corruption and inefficiency in American history, there was strong sentiment in favor of drafting him for yet a third. But if Grant's failure in the presidency was not apparent to all his contemporaries, it was clear enough for posterity to see. And it was quite possible that Eisenhower felt that the surest way of avoiding a similar place in history was to emulate Sherman and Pershing, not Grant.

Elections in Italy

For all the talk about presidential candidates, a recent Gallup Poll showed that only nine per cent of Americans thought that the presidential election was the most important problem confronting the nation.

The poll showed that Americans were far more concerned with foreign policy. Indeed, most Americans were considerably more anxious about the outcome of the elections in Italy than about those in their own country. A victory for the Communists and their allies in Italy would face the Western powers with loss of control in the Mediterranean and encourage Stalin to believe that he could overrun all of Europe instead of merely its Eastern half. On the other hand, a Communist defeat which left the de Gasperi government the prisoner of neo-Fascist groups would certainly mean the beginning of the end of Italian democracy. And in that case, whether it fell to the Right or the Left might mean something in terms of a purely military struggle for power, but little in terms of building a democratic world.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the Western Powers sought to influence the Italian elections in every way which did not infringe on Italian sovereignty. Their most spectacular single move was their declaration in favor of transferring the city of Trieste to Italy. Here, they knew they were putting the Italian Communists and the

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Soviet Union on the spot, because of the latter's commitments to Tito. The Russians, for their part, obliged by opposing any change in the Free City's status.

But other methods, somewhat less dramatic, were perhaps even more effective in influencing the Italian voters.

Americans of Italian descent were encouraged to write, and in great numbers did write, to their relatives in Italy, expounding the glories of democracy and the evils that would ensue from a Communist victory. Some of those evils were spelled out by the State Department, which made it clear that a Communist government would receive no aid from this country, whether under the Marshall Plan or otherwise. Meanwhile, the extent of present aid was emphasized both by a large-scale propaganda campaign and by a number of well-timed gestures.

A significant role was also played by American labor organizations. Both the AFL and CIO indicated that they not only regarded a Communist victory as undesirable, but that if it occurred, their opposition to political strings on the Marshall Plan would not prevent them from supporting the American government in refusing further aid. Nor were they alone among democratic labor movements in following this course. British labor leaders lent their active support to the campaign of Giuseppe Saragat's anti-Communist Socialist Party of Italian Labor, seeking to persuade as many workers as possible to support Saragat's party instead of the Communist-dominated Socialist party of Pietro Nenni. So did such French Socialist leaders as Léon Blum, Daniel Mayer, and Guy Mollet.

By the end of the campaign, most observers felt certain that the Communists would suffer a setback. But few expected the results to be as favorable to the government as they were. Premier de Gasperi's Christian Democrats secured almost half the votes and a clear majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Saragat made substantial inroads on the working-class vote, on which the Communists and Nenni had counted. As a result, the latter lost a number of their former strongholds in Northern Italy—a loss partly made up, however, by increasing their strength among the peasants of the South. And the extreme right-wing and neo-Fascist groups secured only negligible support. At least for the moment, it was certain that the government of Italy would remain firmly in the hands of the Center.

The election might perhaps have resulted in a defeat for the Communists and their allies even if there had been no outside intervention against them. Certainly the efforts of the Catholic Church in mobilizing support for the Christian Democratic party played an important role in the outcome. Yet at least the degree of the anti-Communist victory seemed due in large part to the active participation in the electoral campaign of forces outside Italy.

There were some who, though anti-Communist themselves, had felt that it was wrong for other nations, and for groups within them, to endeavor actively to influence the Italian elections. Certainly it had to be admitted that there was something undignified, and perhaps not altogether consistent with the concepts of democracy, in the intense pressure exerted on the will of the Italian people. Some of the methods used were reminiscent of the custom once rather common in American industry of posting notices just before election day announcing that a Democratic victory would be followed by layoffs. This was disturbing even though no election was ever altogether a free expression of a people's will, unaffected by external pressures.

On the other hand, there could be no doubt that the Soviet Union and its satellites, not to mention Communists throughout the world, were in the habit of interfering to the best of their ability in elections everywhere. It would therefore have been somewhat quixotic for the democratic forces of the world to have renounced such methods, and to have left them, as so often in the past, for the exclusive use of the totalitarians. It could be argued, moreover, that even if the democratic process had been subjected to certain strains in the course of the campaign, it remained essentially intact, whereas a Communist victory would have meant its complete destruction.

A more fundamental cause for misgivings in regard to the future lay in the fact that, while the Communists had been defeated for the moment, the evils which had enabled them to win the support of almost a third of the Italian people still remained. A shockingly low standard of living even in the industrial cities, almost incredible poverty

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coupled with a system of absentee landlordism in the rural areas, mass illiteracy, and industrial and agricultural resources far below the needs of the population—so long as these evils remained, the life of Italian democracy would be at best precarious despite all the propaganda that could be brought to bear on its behalf. But if they were removed, democracy would not need the aid of outside pressure.

The Latin-American Front

WHILE American eyes were centered, to a large extent, on the Communist drive for power in Italy, there was ample reason for worry nearer home. The Communist parties of Latin America were far too weak numerically to have any chance of seizing power in free elections. But they were well-organized, and headed by leaders who understood well enough—even if many of their followers did not—that the prime purpose of a Communist party was to serve the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. And by unprincipled political deals, they were able to produce an effect far beyond what their numbers would have appeared to make probable.

One of the countries in which a judicious policy of alliances had paid the Communists handsome dividends was Costa Rica, whose proximity to the Panama Canal made it of special significance. Democracy in Costa Rica was rather highly developed, and governments had long succeeded each other peacefully as the result of free and honest elections. The Communist party existed legally, had members in Congress, and controlled many unions. In the elections of 1944 the victorious candidate, Teodoro Picado, had been backed by the Communists, the United Fruit Company, and dictator Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua. As his term drew toward an end, it became clear that at least some of his supporters had no intention of permitting the 1948 elections to go against his hand-picked successor, Rafael Calderón Guardia. Only a general strike prompted the government to agree to supervision of the elections by an impartial commission.

Nevertheless, when the elections showed the expected majority for the opposition candidate, Ottilio Ulate, the government refused to accept the results. Instead, the old congress—in which Picado's followers, including the Communists, had a majority—threw out the report of the electoral commission and declared that the election had been won by the government candidate. Civil war broke out, and the government's Communist supporters seized control of the capital. Dictator Somoza sent Nicaraguan troops to aid the government, and his brother dictators in Honduras and the Dominican Republic prepared to do likewise. At the same time the Central American democracies of Panama and Guatemala gave at least moral support to the opposition.

The United States, despite the threat of a Communist coup in an area of such immediate strategic importance, took no direct part in the struggle. Instead, this country confined itself to diplomatic representations to the various dictators, protesting against their intervention in the internal affairs of Costa Rica. This, together with similar representations from other American countries, was sufficient to dampen the interventionist enthusiasm of the Dominican and Honduran dictators, and to make even Somoza keep his interference within limits. Left to itself, the Picado government was doomed by the opposition of the great majority of the Costa Ricans. Despite a desperate last-minute Communist attempt to seize sole control and block any agreement, the government surrendered and the third vice-president took office until the meeting of the newly-elected Congress, to which choice of a president was left.

Proximity to the Canal also made Panama's other neighbor, Colombia, an area of special interest to the Communists. And here, as in Costa Rica, a long democratic tradition had made it possible for them to organize legally and take an active part in politics. Numerically not very strong, they nevertheless had a tightly-knit party and controlled most of the unions.

Unlike most Colombians, whether Conservative or Liberal, the Communists did not welcome the holding of the Inter-American Congress in Bogotá. Indeed, they planned to demonstrate against this "imperialist" gathering. On the day set by them for a mass protest, the Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitán was assassinated. Within a matter of minutes, the assassin had been beaten to death and his face obliterated, so that positive identification was impossible.

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Many of Gaitán's followers immediately blamed the assassination on the Conservative government. A mob dragged the assassin's body to the doorstep of President Ospina Perez and deposited it there. Other mobs roamed the streets burning and murdering. The hall where the Conference had been meeting was sacked. The United States Embassy was besieged, and efforts were made to set it on fire. A general strike was called, and the government's resignation was demanded. The Inter-American Conference was forced to suspend its sessions.

So swiftly had the mobs appeared and begun burning and murdering, that their spontaneous formation seemed highly improbable. The most plausible explanation seemed to be that the assassination had been the fortuitous act of a deranged individual, but that the Communists had seized the opportunity which it offered to turn their party demonstration into a large-scale riot—which they hoped would in turn become a revolution—and to direct the resentment of the people at Gaitán's murder into anti-Yankee channels. In any case, the entire center of the city was wrecked, several hundred lives lost, and over twenty million dollars worth of property destroyed. (The representative of the American Jewish Committee at the Conference, Dr. Maximo Yagupsky, reported that the entire basis of Jewish economic life in Colombia had been wiped out.)

Order was finally restored by the formation of a coalition cabinet of the Liberal and Conservative parties. The sessions of the Conference were resumed. But its prestige had been damaged, and the United States had suffered a serious propaganda setback. Moreover, the material loss which the rioting had caused was certain to reduce still further the standard of living of Colombia's workers, and it was the economic pressure to which shortages and inflation had subjected them which had made them so ready to respond to Communist agitation.

Palestine Between East and West

For a time, Palestine had seemed to be an exception to the general rule that all minor conflicts in the world tended to be absorbed into the major one between the United States and the Soviet Union. The partition resolution had been forced through the General Assembly by the joint action of both powers, and had been hailed as a shining example of the type of cooperation which could establish a genuine international order. Even at the time, however, the appearance of Soviet-American harmony had been illusory. The failure to accompany the partition plan with any provisions for its implementation was due primarily to the impossibility of agreement between the two powers.

It was Russia which reaped whatever political benefit was to be gained from the partition resolution both in Palestine itself and among Zionists in the United States. (The United States, however pro-Zionist, was closely allied to Great Britain, designated by Zionists as Public Enemy Number 1.) This trend appeared not only in the election of Leo Isacson to Congress in the Bronx, but in the merger of Hashomer Hatzair and Ahdut Avodah into the United Socialist party, a group which differed from the dominant Labor party—the Mapai—mainly in its wish to substitute a definitely Eastern orientation for the neutrality which such leaders as Ben Gurion sought to maintain. It was difficult to judge the relative strength of the two labor parties in Palestine, since there had been no recent elections, but the elections held in the DP camps provided an ominous index. Here Mapai, formerly the strongest party, polled barely half the votes given to the United Socialist party and ran somewhat behind the Revisionists. Indeed, the Laborites who had furnished much of the leadership of Zionism in Palestine and internationally seemed to be losing ground to both the Russian-oriented group and the Revisionists.

The trend was intensified after the United States reversed its position on partition. The advocates of an Eastern orientation chortled that one could never trust the West; the terrorists and their supporters in America declared that terror was the only language the powers understood, and that the hesitancy of the Agency leadership in using it was responsible for the defeat of the Zionist cause. In Palestine itself, the Irgun repeatedly precipitated conflicts which Haganah had sought to postpone; it was occasionally repudiated verbally, but no action was taken against it. Instead, pressure for a merger of the terrorist groups with Haganah increased, on the

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ground that unity was essential for successful military action.

Where there is no Truce

Meanwhile, at Lake Success, the United States was moving tentatively and hesitantly in the direction of a new solution. While submitting—without committing itself, and for discussion only—a proposal for the establishment of a temporary trusteeship, it also introduced in the Security Council a new truce resolution. Like previous appeals, it was approved by the Council, and like them it had no effect whatsoever in Palestine. Both Zionists and Arabs agreed to accept it only on conditions, and the conditions were mutually exclusive. In particular, the Zionists resented a provision which would have prohibited the immigration of Jews capable of bearing arms, and another which would have prevented action to establish a Jewish state on May 15. The Arabs objected because the resolution did not completely bar Jewish immigration during the truce, or specify the abandonment of partition.

In Palestine, an equally futile effort to obtain a cease-fire agreement was made by the British High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham. Even attempts by the Consular corps and the British chairman of the Jerusalem Municipal Council to secure a local truce for that city were without effect. Instead, the war around Jerusalem, as well as elsewhere in Palestine, increased in intensity as the British forces withdrew to an ever more limited area. In most of Palestine, they were now either absent altogether, or confined themselves to the role of intermediaries in negotiations for the surrender of the defeated parties in local battles.

For a while, it seemed that the intervention of the International Red Cross might at least introduce a note of humanity into the struggle. Both sides pledged themselves to abide by the laws of war, and these were certainly far preferable to the lawless barbarity currently associated with peace. But it was soon obvious that neither side had any intention of abiding by this agreement: the "execution" of prisoners and the murder of non-combatants continued to be accepted as a matter of course.

In what was probably the worst single atrocity to date, the Irgun and Stern gangs seized the unoffending village of Deir Yassin and killed between two and three hundred of its inhabitants, about half of them women and children. (The character of the "battle" was obvious from the fact that the total losses of the attackers were three killed and four wounded.) The survivors were paraded as captives through the streets of Jerusalem. The *New York Times* at first reported that the attack had been made with the knowledge of the local Haganah commander. However, the Jewish Agency and Haganah subsequently condemned it, pointing out that Deir Yassin was one of the few villages near Jerusalem which had refused to permit itself to be used as a base for Arab forces. Haganah referred to the perpetrators of the attack as "the dissidents who disgraced the cause of the Jewish fighter and the honor of Jewish arms and the Jewish flag." On the same day that Haganah and the Agency issued the statements of condemnation, the Zionist Actions Committee, over the opposition of the two Labor parties and under the leadership of the American General Zionists, approved the pending agreement for the merger of Haganah and Irgun.

A few days later, Deir Yassin was matched by an equally shocking Arab atrocity: the attack from ambush on a convoy going to the Hadassah Hospital and Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. Here, the victims were physicians, nurses, and scholars. It was not easy to see what military purpose could have been served by the attack.

Meanwhile, both sides prepared to extend the war. Haganah spoke of securing planes—it already had some, but they appeared to be non-combat types—and of mounting an offensive to gain control of all the territory between Haifa and Galilee, as well as along the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem road. Meanwhile the Zionist seizures of Tiberias and Haifa and attacks on Jaffa and Acre provoked an immediate response. In Transjordan, King Abdullah let it be known that the Arab Legion would participate openly in the fighting even before May 15 and his forces were reported on the march. And in all the Arab countries, there were popular demonstrations and demands that the Arab regular armies go into action at once.

The prospects for a truce in the near future did not appear good.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

IN PROMISED DIXIELAND

Roanoke Saturdays and Blue-Fringed Mountains

EARL RAAB

EXCEPT for being mildly affronted by its logical perversity, we accepted Saturday morning attendance at what was called "Sunday school," like everything else, as part of the inscrutable pattern of our days. Absenteeism was sensibly scorned. This hour and a half was the rigorous core around which our day of abandon was formed—the preface to an afternoon in one of Roanoke's (Virginia) fumigant-scented movie houses. After Rabbi Rivkin, Ramon Navarro.

It was a Saturday custom to gather on the street early, before adult stirrings. The Bluemont Cemetery was its quietest, stretching, green or brown, into the lumping Allegheny foothills. Occasionally there were unfrenzied excursions into marbles or one-a-cat, but for the most part we lay on our backs in damp-grass seminar and watched the waning of a bleached moon. The mountains were purple-clear and close, shouldering the city in an intimate ring. This was an hour of bemusement, recess from urgency. The Bully (Paul) knuckled the smaller boys, but without conviction. The Buffoon blew expert spit-bubbles—reflectively. The Baby (Jerry) giggled quietly into the grass. All of us, six or eight, chatted languidly, softly, waiting for breakfast time to mark the beginning of Saturday's activity.

Of course, there were only two or three of us in the Ghent section of Roanoke for whom Saturday had a special significance. Paul and the others, as Gentiles, fulfilled their Sunday school obligations, less fashionably, on Sunday.

They were still deep in the woods, in their bow and arrow maneuvers, when we ceremonially boarded the bus on the corner.

THIS was the first formal indication of the Sabbath: bouncy seats, shiny knobs, and —most intoxicating—the sophisticated perfume mixture of gasoline, leather, and lady passengers. We squirmed and squealed, but as the bus turned the Winston corner to approach the Temple, there was always a sudden, disconcerting regrouping of the stomach muscles. This was little more than an "institutional twinge." After all, our rabbi was clean-shaven and had once played checkers with dinner plates on his kitchen linoleum.

Pooling our information on religious matters, we had been able to categorize the members of our faith, in order of intensity, as Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, worshiping respectively in shuls, synagogues, and temples. Our impressions of the first group were arranged in a moist pattern of tasselled shawls, thick black beards, and the solemn dance of candle-glow on shaded walls. There were dark corners, mysteries, and muttered anguish, an emotional incontinence that deeply embarrassed us. We were unable at the time to define our aversion and knew that the utmost tolerance must be practiced in such matters; still, it

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was always gratifying to consider the probably grim fastness of the shul as we approached our own clean-cut temple.

It was never quite decided whether the middle group, the muddled Conservatives of the synagogue, did or did not wear beards.

THE italicized phrases beneath the English words in our Saturday morning hymn books were pleasant to enunciate, thick and sensuous in the mouth.

Adenoi Elohenu . . . Adenoi echod. . . .

After all, work-a-day practice had made us familiar with the system of affirming one's loyalties early each morning in song. Our public-school principal, a wonderful muscle bulging in her forearm, rang us in from the yard with a large bronzed cow-bell, and we immediately stood by our desks, waiting for the down-beat. We sang "Dixie" first. Our bodies, still warm from the playgrounds, leaped with its rhythm.

Oh I wish I was in Dixie . . . Hooray . . . Hooray . . . .

Understandably, we were very fond of Dixieland (i.e., Virginia). For at least one of us, the standard image was the Confederate soldier pictured in our history book, returning from a lost war. He was slumped over his horse, but his bent figure seemed somehow to express an unextinguished pride, a gallantry that was lacking in the blue-clad conqueror from the cold north. He was a sensitive man, overwhelmed by the brute, but spiritually invincible, aggrandized by defeat.

After "Dixie," we sang "America," evoking images of a breathtaking expanse of land, and of cool-eyed, white-wigged patriots scrambling into assembly. They were admittedly worthy people, but inspired no major passions.

The system was easily extended to the Sabbath, when we chorused, with somewhat more enthusiasm our acceptance of one more of the loyalties to which we had been born.

This singing, even in translation (we sang in English, of course), was relatively imageless. The only personality involved was The Lord, and there were no pictures. As a matter of fact, we suspiciously avoided any concrete contemplation of The Lord. We were doing very well without thinking heavily about Him, and, as they say in baseball, why break up a winning combination?—especially on Saturday. We left such matters to the cowled supplicants of the shul. However, we were not disrespectful; conscious of the dignity of the occasion, we stood straight and solemn in our fresh clothes to sing.

During the Bible story period, excitement mounted and attention strayed to the familiar Allegheny fringes, seen through the open windows high on the wall. The stories themselves, however, were not considered dull. They were dramatic, and the characters arresting, particularly since they were, so to speak, relatives. Moreover, their moral quality was recognized, just as we recognized the historical quality in the school tales of early Virginia. It was possible to draw a distinct line leading from ourselves back to the birth-adventures of the Old Dominion State, the Mother State, the State of Presidents—even back to the famed salt licks, which were somehow very significant for the old animals of pre-colony Virginia. And there was another line, less distinct, which tied us also to Abraham.

We of the Ghent contingent had a third lore to consider, at least as interesting if less credible than the others, spun by Jerry's old Indian maid-servant, who would have been impressive if only for a precariously fitted upper plate. With much clacking of porcelain, she struggled through stories of a time that antedated the order of the biblical world.

The favorite concerned a hero who rose to the upper world where people were eagles. Assisted by a spider woman's magic, he defeated the bumblebees in the tumblewood, achieving thereby a magic power by which he was able to rob the people down below. Victorious and wealthy, he was then lifted up to the final heaven by ropes of lightning.

Her narrative, however, did not confuse us. There may have been doubts as to the strict historical truth of some of the Bible stories, but their ethical authenticity, at least, was unquestioned. None of us would ever have thought of stealing. Certainly not in earnest (that is to say, not because we had to).

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THE completion of the Bible story session marked the climax of our weekly existence. We fanned out from the Temple into the downtown district. There were preliminaries. Fathers stood by, courtesies were extended to business associates, all of whom seemed in excessively wordy humor. Then with a few more coins added to the group in our handkerchiefs, we made our precipitate plunge into the sensual.

The symbolic quality of the small-town drug store has not been overdone by the pamphleteers. Air-cooled by a revolving fan from above, cushioned from below, we rested our arms on marble and watched festival fingers assemble our lunch. We were always reverent in this very chapel of well-being, free from any hint of the bacterial or the malevolent, the polished cradle of the good life. Our lunches were chosen for color as well as taste, bright egg-salad yellow rating high along with golden-toast brown. Diets and colors were unvarying from week to week.

On a table near the exit was piled an impressive mound of candies, and a sign that read sweetly: "Three for Ten." The formula: two chocolate bars and a pack of chewing gum.

Then, heavy with nourishment, we marched into the dark chambers of a downtown theater where, for the next few hours, we were a delirious part of that mass decerebrate: the motion picture audience.

THIS was the Sabbath, the meridian.

There were nightmares—chambers of dark space through which we fell, almost familiar ogres from whom we fled, shadows that breathed over us where we lay—but these were clearly in error. Saturday was the reality. The comfortable Allegheny range was the reality.

On other days the elders piped *their* tune. Twice or so a week they played bridge. Often at night we went along, stretched on couches, rocking between two worlds, nodding with the ghostly murmurs. . . .

Vulnerable . . . double . . . spade . . . vulnerable. . . .

But there were more novel patterns. Hesitantly our fathers were wrapping themselves in baggy knickers and checked socks for Sunday golf. Our mothers held club sessions and asked such suggestive questions as: "Are parents people?" There were dinners with placecards, and dances with cocktail bars. The women draped their living rooms with thick Chinese rugs and scouted new apartment houses. And the "*schfartzes*" came to do their housework every day.

This was an exquisite historical metamorphosis. Not only out from bondage, not only out from the ghetto, but actually in a favored caste position. Our parents stiffly enforced the conventions in a kind of delicious self-flagellation—although they rarely countenanced cruelty, in the manner of the native whites. (For his part, the Negro declined to relinquish his own prerogative, and deeply, impotently cherished the Shylock tradition.)

Was this not the Promised Land, the green field? "Oh Lord, hast Thou led Thy people. . . ." In 1825, when Roanoke was a trading post on a highway junction, many of our ancestors were on the rack of pogrom or poverty in Eastern Europe. Here, a century later, pogrom and poverty were unthinkable, and even their memory was being erased . . . the *yarmalkes* had disappeared . . . the intonation was in a state of repression. Our generation, in no humility, was to inherit the earth.

THE way of the Lord had been slow. Elias Legarde—no Moses—had set Jewish foot in Richmond in the third decade of the 17th century. But this was the land of the Cavalier, fabulous plantation, established church, mercantile sterility. It was more than a hundred and fifty years after the coming of Elias that the first congregation was constituted in Richmond—Beth Sholom, formed by the "non-barbarians": Spanish, Portuguese, and a few select Germans. Another century passed before a congregation was established in Roanoke. At the time of the Great War, there were fifteen thousand Jews in the Old Dominion state; at the end of the Great Depression, almost twice that many.

As a people we had toiled through millennia, clambered over continents, sailed into the port of New York, filtered down and ended here. The ancient pilgrimage was at rest in Virginia.

Of course, for each Virginia pilgrim there

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were still five hundred of The Tribe wandering in the wilderness—but this circumstance was not altogether a misfortune: in Roanoke, our ratio to the Gentiles was one to a hundred and forty, which constantly provided a kind of mathematical comfort. We were but half a thousand and there was solace in insignificance.

In Norfolk, later, we numbered six thousand, enough to require a further refinement in the process of dilution. A sizeable contingent, whose lineal relationship stretched back generally to Western Europe, made considerable use of the concept of the "savage Slav." The famous feud of the Russian Jew versus the German Jew burned smartly, since the "German" felt that the "Russian," by innate blatancy, imperiled his position. Social and religious lines were drawn up, and the "Germans" waged a constant campaign of identification-by-etiquette.

The favorite matron's story, "The Tale of the Washed Jew," which assumed folk-tale proportions, was set in an exclusive hotel, or beach club, or restaurant. The protagonist (narrator) had been thrown together, quite by accident, with a group of strange women. In the course of the meal, or whatever program was involved, they had all become friendly, mutually attracted by similarities in taste, manners, and apparent social standing. The narrator, as a matter of fact, had managed to be rather impressive. Suddenly, across the lobby (boardwalk, restaurant floor) dashed a host of screaming, dishevelled, loose-jointed individuals with dark hair. This naturally turned the conversation of the strange women into a quiet derogation of the obstreperous Hebrew. Our heroine expertly allowed the dramatic tensions of the situation to accumulate, and then very softly said: "You know . . . I'm a Jewess." There was a shock of silence, uneasy change of conversation, but eventually one of the women, bright-eyed, would turn and say: "Dear, I never knew there were . . . like you." The affair, according to the narrator, ended in a heart-warming atmosphere of kindliness and understanding.

This story had variations, but invariably included, along with overt disapproval of the strange women's bigotry, an unmistakable element of applause for their social discernment. And the narrator felt that she had struck a blow (perhaps the only possible kind) against anti-Semitism. There had been a (somewhat understandable) confusion of the Jew and the Unwashed, and that had been set straight. Eventually the laws of social exclusion would be drawn along more logical lines.

This did not, however, remain the exclusive tradition of the "German Jew." Qualified Russian Jews became elite by invitation, and, indeed, they formed their own elite. The German-Russian antagonism persisted only vestigially, and the "cultured" Jew-"uncultured" Jew polarity set the more significant vogue.

And yet, even as children in Roanoke, a pertinent sense of urgency was transmitted to us. It was subtly evident that there was a Jewish exorcism to perform, and, under parental tutelage, we became adept at it. In restaurants we ate our chocolate pudding a little more carefully, in buildings we shrieked a little less loudly, in streetcars we became a little less sick. There were aunts who were nervously polite to salespeople, and uncles who carefully referred to O.P.'s (Our People) when talking in public places.

Only in retrospect did the over-all pattern become clear: survival by suicide.

But as children, we could well afford these special obligations. There were special rewards: summertime was synonymous with Virginia Beach, the perennial playground. Plans were in assembly all during spring. Sometimes there were only several weeks, sometimes all of vacation time. The warm sand stretched as far as the eye could see, paced by the wide cement boardwalk, but we always lived in the same "restricted" area. Here were the hotels and rooming houses where our friends and relatives stayed, and our part of the beach was a pattern of discrete little districts of rendezvous. The various groups swelled in the evenings and on weekends with temporary refugees from the Norfolk heat.

The rest of the beach was alien land, and we cavorted down it with a sense of exploration. There was always the compulsion to run magically along the water line, just teasing away from the ocean's bubble-edged

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swirl. In the evening, fresh clothes luxurious against our smarting bodies, we walked down to the amusement center. While older people left us for the darkened boardwalk dance floor, we wandered with our pennies and nickels through the bright wonderland of violent machines and gaudy prizes. Finally spent, we trudged home, caressed around with the curling ends of the music and the water's lazy whap. There was the early morning to think about, the unpeopled beach, and the ocean a sad gray sheet lifting the morning sun.

At vacation's end, we had the rest of the year to loll in the benefits of normalcy. On weekday mornings, our first concern was the aspect of the mountains. (It was usually friendly.) In the afternoon we ran on bright green lawns. At night we sat by the cemetery, manufactured frightening stories, shivered at the strange, black, threatening mien of the Blue Ridge.

But always, we marked the days until our spiritual revival: The Sabbath and its fruits.

UNTIL there came the uneasy years, the startling years, when the world suddenly turned unfamiliar. Faces went strange, landmarks uncertain. Our dear mountains gradually stiffened into a rocky wall. And slowly we began to suspect that somehow, somewhere, we would have to begin all over again—if indeed it were not too late.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

DEATH WITH A KISS

Last Testament of a Palestine Pioneer

MEIER DIZENGOFF

THIS last testament of the famous Mayor of Tel Aviv might be thought of as in the tradition of a centuries-old form of Jewish national expression—the ethical will, as typified by such other writers as Judah ibn Tibbon, Nahmanides, and the Eleazar of Mayence. MEIER DIZENGOFF was one of the pioneers of Palestine, and one of the leaders in the upbuilding of that land. He made the first purchases of land near Jaffa in 1905 as co-founder of the land-purchasing society, Geulah; a few years later he helped found Tel Aviv. A great figure in the development of the city, he served as its mayor for six years. He knew the people, and they knew and revered him. He died in 1936, and was universally mourned. Before his death he gave this article to the editors of the daily labor newspaper *Davar,* where it was published September 23, 1936. The translation is by Mordecai S. Chertoff.—ED.

I WANT my death to be "with a kiss." For is it not written that every Israelite can be even as Moses our Teacher? And since he died with a kiss, why can't I too hope to die the same way?

While still a child I pictured the matter corporeally and very simply: when Moses and the emigrants from Egypt reached Mt. Nebo, the Holy One blessed be He came down from the heavens to the mountain in all His glory, called Moses to Him, and kissed him, and at that very moment his soul took flight. In a later period, when my pious teachers had taught me that God has neither body nor form, I conceived of this "death with a kiss" in another way: on the summit of Mt. Nebo, from which Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and the Jordan Valley are visible, God revealed Himself to Moses and said to him: "Enough, Moses my servant, you have done enough. You have taken the Children of Israel out of Egypt, led them across the desert, given them the Torah and brought them to the threshold of the Chosen Land which I promised to give to them and to their seed as an eternal heritage. Now that land, so delightful, is before you. Look upon it from the mountain, for your task upon earth is completed. Ascend!" Moses died, and none knows his burial place to this very day. That was death with a kiss, because God took Moses to Himself.

From this standpoint there are many deaths which may be characterized as with a kiss. For example, the last moments of Rabbi Cook, of blessed memory, and the manner of his death. As the death-throes approached their climax, all his friends, the rabbis, gathered around his bed and prayed, continually reciting the prime exhortation of every believing Jew: Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One! The dying rabbi answered them with enfeebled voice as he passed away: ". . . is One." That, too, was death with a kiss, for Rabbi Cook died serene and composed, like one who has fulfilled all of his earthly obligations, and at the last moment expressed in one word the sole aim of his life. Of one

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such as this one may say: "A righteous man in his faith liveth and in his faith dieth."

Here is what my mother of blessed memory told me about the death of her father, who had been a Reb in a small town in Russia and who also died a kind of death with a kiss. On that last day —he died at the age of ninety-five—he asked the family to bathe him and wrap his *tallith* around him, and he began the *Vidui* and the *Al het*. Then he closed his eyes and prayed until noon. Suddenly he stirred and looked at his family, at the heads of the village standing around his bedside, and declared: "I beg the pardon of any of you whom I may have insulted, and I forgive any of you who may have been guilty of lèse majesté towards the Torah. 'And thou shalt pore over it day and night!'—I believe with a thoroughgoing belief . . ." and with these words his soul took flight. Such a death is not one of compulsion, where one dies in spite of oneself, but rather acquiescence in death; a transition from one state to another, from one world to another, and such a death I call "with a kiss."

WHEN I consider my own death, the thought does not arouse within me any feelings of grief, of sorrow, or of mourning, for the whole process of exchanging one form for another is natural and normal. The time has come to close all accounts with my life and work in this world. I now stand upon the threshold of a new period and a new world which are unknown to me, beyond the bounds of the knowable. The assignments which I filled during my lifetime give me complete spiritual satisfaction, knowing that I spent not my days in vain, and that all my public work was for my fellow Jews and for the good of our precious land.

I picture my last day this way:

Behind my bier the children of Tel Aviv —those angels and darling cherubs whom I so loved—will trudge. In sturdy compact lines, their heads held high, they follow the casket, and I hear their murmuring as though crying: "Don't leave us, Grandpa dear, we love you so. . . ."

Behind the children stride the youth, for whom boundless opportunities in the work of reclamation and redemption are open, who live always in an atmosphere of dreams and idealistic aspirations. I always considered myself a friend to this young generation, with whom I've ever felt an affinity of soul and spirit. When asked my age, I would answer: I don't know exactly how many years have passed me by, but I still feel myself ready for any excesses or daring undertakings, only provided that they bring us to the desired goal. This youth will inherit our places upon the platform of public service, it will carry on our battle and bring us to a realization of our national aspirations. It is not surprising, therefore, that it should accompany me to my last resting place; I am content that when I am in my grave, even then when I am beyond the bounds of the knowable, the contact will be maintained between me and these bold young people.

And a large group of women take part in the procession too. These are the mothers who bore this young generation, and who guard the transmission of the tradition from father to son. These mothers, through their milk and marrow, through the cradle-songs they sing to their infants, transmit all the good, the lofty, and the noble which they in turn inherited from their own mothers, and which is preserved in the treasury of the people as faith and hope and will-to-live, and will continue our history.

Besides all these, surrounding the procession—masses of people. Men, women, and children of all walks of life and all occupations, coming to accompany to his last resting place him whom they had become accustomed to see working and striving on many fronts in the campaign for the redemption and resettlement of the land, some fifty years.

When my corpse is finally lowered into the cold, damp grave, and they cover the coffin with earth, I imagine that light will emanate from the procession itself, and the rays will soak through the clods of earth to light the way in which I must go, and to tell me that I died not against my will, but rather "with a kiss."

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THE STUDY OF MAN

THE GOLDEN LAND

The Jewish Immigrant in America: Self-Portrait

MOSES KLIGSBERG

OVER the years in the American saga, the Jewish immigrant has become a well-worn character. The dark chapters of his story are all too familiar—the enforced flight from Europe because of the terrors of persecution, arrival in America with dreams of a promised land, and then long years of frustration and unhappiness during which the first vision dims into utter disillusionment. In Yiddish literature, "the Golden Land" is a continually recurring phrase, but said almost always in irony or sadness.

Not only the novelists and amateur sociologists have contributed to this master-image of the American Jewish immigrant. Liberals, radicals, and Jewish nationalists have also found in the "tragic immigrant" grist for their ideological mills. That the bulk of the immigrants represented the embittered and defeated of the East European ghetto; that their subsequent experience in America led them only to a deepened awareness of inevitable, fundamental homelessness and insecurity—these are made to serve as historical "lessons," pointing to some partisan millennium as the only salvation from a hopeless fate.

It has been a one-sided story—and in all the hundreds of thousands of words written on the subject, no one has apparently thought to ask the immigrant his own views of himself and his American experience.

However, at the beginning of 1942, the Yivo (Yiddish Scientific Institute) sponsored an autobiographical contest for Jewish immigrants, which had for its theme: "Why I Left the Old Country and What I Have Achieved in America." The flood of autobiographies elicited by this contest can be considered the first substantial sampling of opinion on this subject. And although the final interpretation of the material must await further study, one thing is clear and unequivocal: the immigrants do not subscribe to the accepted portraits of themselves.

The impulse for the contest was two-fold. First of all, social scientists in the last thirty years have increasingly resorted to personal documents and first-hand interviews as the starting-points of inquiry. That documents of this kind provide perhaps the most direct reve-

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THE image of the Jewish immigrant as reflected in the mirror of literature—and in much Jewish ideological writing—has tended to be one of frustration, disillusionment, and tragedy: the Golden Land turned out to be a hoax. Yivo (the Yiddish Scientific Institute), the alert and pioneering social-scientific institution (whose transplanting from its native Vilna in 1940 was described in Milton R. Konvitz's "Yivo Comes to Morningside," COMMENTARY, January 1947), has not been willing to accept this literary cliché as sociological truth, uninvestigated. Here one of its members, MOSES KLIGSBERG, reports on several studies undertaken to throw light on the subject. These took the form of autobiographical contests in which Jewish immigrants were themselves asked to appraise their American experience. The results, however they may be interpreted, will be seen to be less in the vein of Dreiser, Asch, Gold, or Weidman, than in the style of an earlier American chronicler, Horatio Alger—with a difference. Mr. Kligsberg was born in Warsaw and came to this country in 1941, after spending two years as a refugee in Lithuania. He has studied psychology at the University of Warsaw and Columbia University, and is a research fellow at the Yivo. He has contributed to the *Yivo Annual of Social Science*, and is the author of a book on *Youth Psychology and Education* (Warsaw, 1937).

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lation of the motives and dynamic forces underlying the subject's "life history" would seem self-evident. Second, there is a special dearth of material needed by the researcher into Jewish life. The Jewish social scientist does not possess government archives, nor has there been, until very recently, any American cultural institution sufficiently interested in the great wave of Jewish immigration to amass documentary material. For these reasons the personal document takes on an unusual importance in the investigation of Jewish immigrant history, and we must increasingly now seek out the memoirs and first-hand narratives of those who went through the experience.

This is exactly what the Yivo attempted to do in holding its autobiographical contest. The instructions, printed in many Yiddish newspapers and publicized throughout the cultural institutions of American Jewry, made it amply clear that the stated theme of the contest was merely the jumping-off point for a full autobiography. In response, two hundred and fifty autobiographies were submitted, the average entry being about one hundred pages long. The ages of the contestants ranged from thirty to seventy-nine. All groups, from the first mass immigration wave in 1881 down to the most recent refugees (1940) from the European debacle were represented; the former group, of course, was in the great majority.

A word of caution, however, as to the "representativeness" of the material made available by the contest. Though the manuscripts undoubtedly reflect a cross-section of all generations and strata of Jewish immigrants for the past sixty years, they cannot be relied upon for purposes of a strictly statistical nature. Too few, as compared with the total number of existing Jewish immigrants, entered the contest to give it more than a limited value scientifically. At the same time, enough entries were received to reflect and to identify certain dominant notes in the immigrant Jewish consciousness.

How do these generations of Jewish immigrants feel about their experiences in America? With astonishing unanimity they all voice satisfaction.

To start with, there is great content with their decision to come to America; not one regrets his emigration. Usually, they talk of their coming to America in terms like this: "[On such and such a date] I stepped on the happy soil of America"; or "[On such and such a date] I placed my foot on the free soil of America." All descriptions of the arrival in America are paraphrases of one thought: it was a spectacularly happy milestone in their lives.

With equal unanimity, they describe the hard years of "ungreening" themselves without bitterness, reproaches, or any general criticism of the America which received them. In one autobiography after another, the difficult experiences of these years are described with a notable absence of negative emotion. Only two out of the entire group of 250 American autobiographers were disgruntled and unhappy: one because of a bad family situation, and the other —although he was a successful professional man —perhaps because of the wide gap between his youthful dreams and his actual realization of them.

What are the specific sources of this satisfaction with the American experience? On the simplest level, the sense of achievement: each writer is conscious that he has gone further—in economic and social terms—than was possible in Europe. Beyond that, there is the sense of a freer and more secure life, without the constant and overburdening restrictions of Eastern European society; the socialists among the immigrants show a particularly sharp consciousness of the contrast between American democracy and the oppressive regime of Russian Czarism. Finally—and above all—the older generation finds happiness in its children.

One autobiographer says: "What have I then achieved here? My children are the true gift of my achievements; they have all gone through college. . . ." Another maintains that the older immigrant generation should be proud of itself because it has "brought up a generation of doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants." A third: "My children are my greatest achievement in America." Nearly all of them speak in this way, proud of their children's education, higher position on the social ladder, and larger social usefulness.

In its announcement, Yivo was careful to emphasize that it wanted the contestants to describe the cultural relations between themselves and their children. Only a few made a real effort to comply and these spoke with a pathetic vagueness of a certain cultural estrangement between parents and children, a difference in outlook on life, and so on. One autobiographer states: "Our children see salvation

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through different eyes. I have to listen to my son and keep silent, because to tell him the simple truth, to tell him the story of my entire fifty years of life, would simply mean that his father is still groping around in God's world and has prepared for him nothing definite."

Only two of the contestants find it possible to speak of a spiritual kinship and sense of nearness to their children. One, a man active in communal affairs, says: "It is true that I have not succeeded in bringing up well educated children, but that is why I have the joy that *my children are with me*" (author's emphasis); a similar statement is made by another contestant, a labor official.

But in spite of this apparent spiritual gap between parents and children, the majority of the writers, at least ninety per cent, simply express full satisfaction with their children and are very proud of their education and their social status. This is the most important fact in their feeling of having achieved their goals, the source of the gratification that holds first place in their minds. Apparently it was only in this last sense that they understood Yivo's question about their cultural relations with their children. In addition, there is a strong identification with the children: the writers appear more important in their own eyes by virtue of the education and higher social positions attained by their children.

Should one take this at face value? Is it not possible that this very identification with the children implies in the parents a basic discontent with their own lot and a desire to see realized in someone else the goals which for themselves have proved unattainable? Is there a compensatory mechanism at work here? And in addition: may not the unanimity of satisfaction be an unconscious effort to improve on the truth on the part of conventionally respectable people very conscious of the fact that their words may be made public?

These questions are certainly relevant. It cannot be denied that the self-selection of the entrants, combined with the very wording of the contest's title ("What I Have Achieved in America"), tended automatically to eliminate those who had suffered failure or fallen short of their set goals. However, against such criticism there still stands the evidence of the autobiographies themselves—with their reiterated and unequivocal assertion that, by and large, the immigrant Jew has seen America and found it good. And it is surely possible to have legitimate pride in the success of one's descendants without automatically becoming vulnerable to the kind of analysis-by-opposites that always reads "minus" where "plus" is written—that always takes expressed satisfaction for the symptom of an inner dissatisfaction.

We are fortunate, moreover, in possessing another series of autobiographies that provides a valuable frame of reference and helps to give us the proper perspective. These autobiographies are the result of a previous set of contests held by Yivo in Poland in 1934 and 1939. The contestants were drawn chiefly from the young Jewish people of Poland, youths between fifteen and twenty-four years of age, and their autobiographies can be regarded in some sense as embodying the European past of the American immigrant. Even after allowances have been made for the general worsening of the political situation, it is still clear that the Polish youths, in describing their plight and frustration, are describing in essence the circumstances which the American immigrants left behind to come to the new land.

What story do these Polish youths tell us? It is a story of intense pessimism and frustration, contrasting most sharply with the explicit satisfaction of the Americans. Here are a few of the characteristic utterances of the Polish youth group: "My autobiography, which I wrote . . . under difficult circumstances and in moral depression . . . is not only mine, it is the biography of tens of thousands of Jewish youth, it is a cry in the dark night for help: don't let us degenerate, don't let us perish." Another explains that his goal is higher education: "Help me find my way, come and lead us, we Jewish youth . . . we, the temperamental, energetic youth beg you: teach us, show us the way, and we will not disappoint you." A third: "Now comes the question: will I be able to reproduce all my tragic experiences?" Still another: "I have been thinking a long time of writing my autobiography, in order to bring out my experiences, sufferings, and pain on paper." A girl writes: "I couldn't help writing since my heart was so overburdened with sorrow." Still another says: "I was miserable, lonely, and old when I wrote these pages in the evenings late at night."

This is the mood that pervades almost all of the youth autobiographies: a wail of frustra-

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tion provoked by the insurmountable obstacles blocking their future.

A survey of the material reveals that it is impossible to assign any single, objective cause for this state of mind. A poor young girl, an orphan, who graduated from a secular Jewish elementary school and continued her cultural and social activities in a youth organization, feels happy although her circumstances are quite impoverished. But a boy of the middle class who is in the last year of the *gymnasium* feels miserable because he sees the way to a professional career full of hindrances. In both cases the family situation figures prominently in determining these different outlooks. The girl's mother was a poor village peddler who did not stress the desire for social advancement; the girl started life with a modest goal, and whatever small advance she made was enough to warrant a feeling of happiness. In the boy's family environment, however, there was considerable discussion of his future career; consequently, when he discovers the futility of his education he is filled with bitterness and frustration. From all this, one can say that the measure of the autobiographer's unhappiness is inevitably the measure of his unrealized hopes for a career and social advancement.

Now, although the two diverse groups of autobiographers, the American and the Polish, are separated by an age difference of thirty to forty years, and although in this space of time many changes took place in the European milieu, still there had been no essential change with regard to the difficulties a Jew encountered in trying to attain a higher position in the Old World society. From a sociological standpoint, and with suitable reservations, the Polish youth and the elderly Americans can be viewed as one continuous group—the accounts of the Polish autobiographers reflecting the past years and problems of the American immigrants.

This enables us to deal with a vital factor in the life history of the American immigrants—a factor which has left a deep impression on all their subsequent behavior—by viewing it, as it were, through the sharpened lens of the Polish experience. I refer here to the key problem that confronts all researchers in this field: the problem of the motives that lay behind the immigrants' original decision to leave Europe.

In all the discussions of this problem, textbook banalities abound. Poverty and persecution —so the story goes—magnified by the impact of social catastrophe, produced the first and succeeding streams of Jewish emigration from Eastern Europe to America. This point of view is especially supported by the fact that it was after the wave of pogroms in Russia in 1881 that the first great influx of immigrants reached American shores.

Although this account is undoubtedly correct as a *surface description*, it does not explain what was at work beneath the obvious. It ignores the distinction which must be drawn between the general desire to emigrate and the specific reasons that moved each particular individual to take the decisive step. Obviously, the pogroms of 1881 and the crises of 1903-4 and 1905-6 affected a much larger part of the Jewish population than the minority who actually emigrated. Consequently, there must have been other compelling psychological reasons that went into the individual decision to emigrate, in addition to the pressure of external events. And if we analyze the American autobiographies, we find confirmation in the fact that with almost all the emigrants, or at any rate the first emigrants of a given family, there were specific personal difficulties and tensions that found resolution in emigration.

The writers of these autobiographies fall into several groups. There are orphans, who lost one or both parents in their childhood; persons who even as children had conflicts with their parents (did not want to go to *heder*, were poor students, had a "wicked" father or mother, joined a revolutionary movement against the wishes of their parents, etc.); others who left home at an early age and went to work in other towns; *yeshiva* students, who from childhood wandered from town to town and from *yeshiva* to *yeshiva*; and, finally, a certain number who had left home as youths to emigrate to distant parts of Russia.

These groups have one thing in common: their ties with their families and home environment were not close, and they were less affected by the traditions which the family and the home environment tried to preserve. They received little protection and guidance, and thus were required from their earliest years to show independence. As a result, they developed an individualistic attitude, a more enterprising spirit, and a looser emotional bond with their environment and traditions.

We need not here get involved in what is

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cause and what is effect—whether the conflicts of early life brought about the development of a greater independence, or whether an "innate" predisposition to independence brought about the conflicts with the environment. The result is the same: an individualistic type. In a period of social instability, this type of person, in whom all the psychological predispositions to emigration were already present, was the first to seize the wanderer's staff.

We can thus assert, on the authority of our autobiographical materials, that the Jewish immigrant community in the United States is by and large a concentration of one social-psychological type, that is, the enterprising, independent, activistic person with a strong individualistic attitude. That is not to say that all immigrants are of this type (certainly not all women and children who came to join husbands or fathers), but it is certain that in our American immigrant community this type is much more strongly represented than it was in any normal, settled Jewish community of Europe.

This does much to clarify the problem of the motives for emigration. As a matter of fact, the various reasons that gave the impetus toward emigration might well be grouped in one category: the ambition for social advancement. This is something quite different from the need to overcome poverty.

One contestant formulates it clearly in this way: "I made plans to go to America in order to get ahead." Another: "In the old home I left an established business that provided us with an adequate livelihood. . . . There remained only the question of a *tachlis* [life-goal] for the children." A third: "The village did not have anything to give to the young people. . . . Many Talmud students in the houses of study exchanged their long *kapotes* for the blue uniforms of *gymnasium* students and went to the *gymnasium* in Odessa or Kiev, or even Germany. . . . Somewhere there sounds a mighty voice calling to us to run away into the wide world—America." A fourth: "I had reached the point where I had to transform myself into a new shape. . . . This couldn't happen in the old home."

Only one says that he went to America to earn a living, to accumulate a little money, and then go back (but he remained). All the others show clearly that the most important pressure for emigration was the desire for social advancement and for a purpose in life—a career.

Naturally, this fact has had a strong influence on the character of the American Jewish community. It finds its prime expression in an active and conscious attempt to fit into American life.

Much has been written about how the conditions of American life have effected changes in the life and thinking of immigrants; but it is clear that just as strong as any "erosive" action of the American environment was the subjective factor of the immigrants' *intention* and *readiness* to adjust themselves. One writer, from a strongly Orthodox family, tells of one of his brothers, who, when he went to work for the first time and was asked his name, was told "Yerahmiel" wouldn't do, and the workers began to call him Jack. "And that is what his name has remained," says our writer. "From that time on we have all called him Jack."

This small incident—a typical pattern in immigrant life—shows how strong was the anticipatory readiness to adjust. (Incidentally, both basic facts revealed here—the prevalence of the independent, vigorous type among the immigrants and their eagerness to adjust—directly contradict the traditional anti-immigration argument that those who seek admission to our shores are the "weak, unassimilable, ungrateful offscourings of Europe.")

For all their independence, the emigrants' decision to leave Europe still involved a conflict between the search for an open road to personal advancement and the ties of a community, a tradition, and a definite way of life. The first won out, as we have seen. But this does not mean that the second was entirely obliterated, for it manifests itself later in various indirect ways.

For example, though none of the American writers expresses any regret at having left Europe, the tie with the old home remains active for decades, expressing itself in well-known forms: bringing over to America as many members of the family as possible—even distant relatives—a duty as sacred as the greatest of the commandments; sending material help to the home village; forming circles that have an old-country basis—*landsmanshaften*, etc. The tendency is to bring over and establish here as much as possible from the old home: certain *landsmanshaften* used to bring over the

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rabbi of the home town, who was for them the embodiment of the community they had left behind.

One observes among the immigrants a distinct hierarchy of preferment with respect to the spiritual values of the old country, intellectual, ethical, abstract values being accorded first place, while the customs and rituals that flourished in the European community are considered much less important. These abstract values are those that can, so to speak, be transported: for the Orthodox, the Torah; for the progressive, the party program. It would seem that the Jew believes his most important spiritual values are capable of the easiest transplantation. What he cannot take with him must be inevitably less valuable.

Here again is strikingly revealed what is perhaps the most constant aspect of the Jewish immigrant personality: a striving for a definite, significant, and ethically meaningful goal in life. It is not enough to seek material gain and personal welfare; welfare must also express itself simultaneously in a social function—as doctor, lawyer, scientist, communal leader, etc. The spiritual elements of the old world that help to give life a meaning are eagerly welcomed in the new land; the external, interfering "habits" are just as eagerly discarded.

The young people of Poland, living under the pressure of constant discrimination, saw their lives in melancholy colors, not so much because of the immediate material disadvantages from which they suffered, but primarily because the way to higher education and the realization of their potentialities was closed.

The immigrants to America, on the other hand, consider themselves fortunate not primarily because their material standard of living has been raised—one finds ocassionally even a tendency to denigrate the purely material side of the autobiographer's achievement—but rather because America has made possible an improvement in their social condition and the chance to develop their personalities. And this seems also to be the underlying motive in their identification with their children and the satisfaction they derive from them: in the educational and social progress and usefulness of the children, they see the fulfillment they sought in America.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Leaders and Followers

To The Editor of Commentary:

Once again, Commentary's regular section, "The Study of Man," provides your readers with a comprehensive and provocative review of the scholarly literature in a field of the social sciences. . . . Daniel Bell's article, " 'Screening' Leaders in a Democracy," in the April issue will be passed on to my students as one of the best summaries they could secure of the literature on leader selection. . . .

Somehow, our popular modern conceptions of a leader do not differ greatly from those of the Middle Ages. We have simply substituted an Arrow collar for shining armor, and the habit of looking people straight in the eye for a "noble mien." Yet the leader of the Middle Ages was an aristocrat, and we are supposed to be living in a democracy. The medieval nobleman was born to his role of leader and he was trained so as to fit passably into the stereotype. The democratic leader is supposed to develop into a position of leadership out of interaction with his fellows.

While Mr. Bell brings out this distinction admirably, he does not develop the positive suggestion that some good studies of leadership might be made by asking the followers their opinions. In the army this was regarded as dangerous, and perhaps some industries would also thus regard it. Obviously, popularity is not the sole criterion of leadership, but most people can distinguish between those whom they like the best and those whom they regard as most effective. The existing studies have not yet fully explored the possibility of asking followers for their estimates of the traits making for effective and satisfactory leadership. One study, which Mr. Bell could not be expected to know about since it has not been released, was conducted by the Research Branch of the Army's Morale Services Division during the war. It has pursued this method of determining the traits of a good leader from evaluations by those led—farther than have any other studies known to me.

Mr. Bell's main service has been to question underlying assumptions in scientific research, assumptions that are unfortunately regarded as so fixed and inherent in the natural order of things that they cannot be examined. If there is to be development in social science, and indeed in all of social thinking, these deep-lying assumptions must be brought out, criticized, and modified.

Arnold Rose

Washington University
Saint Louis, Missouri

Praise for Sartre

To The Editor of Commentary:

I have just read the first article in the series by Sartre which you are currently publishing in Commentary. I find it the most lucid and understanding treatment of the subject by a non-Jew which I have ever read. I intend to use these articles in one of my discussion classes. . . .

Rabbi Victor Eppstein

Hillel Foundation
College of the City of New York
New York City

To The Editor of Commentary:

. . . Nothing in the flood of writing . . . on the subject of so-called group understanding equals in keen analysis and subtle comprehension Sartre's "The Situation of the Jew." Perhaps Carey McWilliams' writings might be put in the same category as Sartre's. All the rest, the sincere, the shallow, the "clever," and the mediocre, at best make only a stab at this complex problem, more often revealing their own ignorance than adding to knowledge and understanding in any measurable degree. I wish that I had the talent to convey how deeply this article in your April issue has impressed a number of us here in Detroit.

Beatrice Miller

Detroit, Michigan

Author's Protest

To The Editor of Commentary:

My first impulse upon reading Milton Klonsky's review of *Lonely Crusade* in the February Commentary was to ignore it. Seldom has a calumny of this bitterness been published

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in a journal of COMMENTARY's stature. But to ignore it might give rise to speculations that Mr. Klonsky's comments have validity. I assure you, they have no validity.

The truth is that Mr. Klonsky's comments evidenced a closer resemblance to hate catharsis than to literary criticism. While this might be permissible in a novel, giving to it an authenticity of emotion, it is intolerable in critical analysis. . . .

Reactions as expressed in Mr. Klonsky's comments come only from subconscious disturbances within the individual. *Lonely Crusade* has touched upon such a disturbance in Mr. Klonsky's personality to bring forth this geyser of vituperation. And that is as it should be; a catharsis of our prejudices ofttimes effects the cure. However, it should not be presented as valid literary criticism. . . .

When Mr. Klonsky writes: "The professed purpose of these books is to prod the American public out of its apathy," he is indulging in an even greater absurdity than the Communist perverters of literature. My purpose in writing *Lonely Crusade* was to create a novel out of the theme of one man, a Negro, searching for manhood. I had no other purpose; I endeavored to argue no point, grind no axe. The search of this man, Lee Gordon, for manhood is the *lonely crusade*. This story could have been written about a Jew, a Gentile, a Chinese, an Indian. It was written about a Negro. . . .

The situations which arise in the narrative do not even begin to encompass the daily brutalities suffered by most American Negroes. It is not intended that they should. Protest against racial injustice was not my principal objective. If such protest is not implicit in my delineation of the destruction of the human personality by oppression, there is no greater protest I can make.

As a Negro, my protagonist, Lee Gordon, is the victim of oppression. The impacts of this oppression generate within him many self-destructive forces—fear, insecurity, anti-Semitism, color psychosis, etc.; in his search for manhood these forces comprise psychological barriers which he must overcome. The fact that he is able to, and does in fact overcome these barriers, should have an inspirational value to all who are oppressed. That was my aim, to inspire those who, like myself, are exposed to the self-destructive forces of oppression, who must continuously and valiantly struggle against acceptance of inferiority; to impart to them, and to myself, the knowledge "that we can, when the occasion calls for it, fight and die for a cause that is greater than any one life, or any one man, or any one group of men."

CHESTER HIMES

Bronx, New York

In Reply

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

To believe that *Lonely Crusade* is a poor novel is not evidence of prejudice against Negroes and/or Chester Himes. Nor do I think "hate catharsis" (a curious term) is "permissible in a novel" or even in a review. I can only refer to my review, the point of which seems to have stuck in the author's throat but merely grazed his mind.

MILTON KLONSKY

New York City

Returned Chaplain: Pro and Con

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the March COMMENTARY, I have read carefully, and with great interest, the article on "Why I Gave Up My Congregation" by a returned Jewish chaplain.

I was a Navy chaplain, of the Protestant faith, in the recent war and I did not return to my parish. It was only natural, therefore, that I read this article first as the magazine came to the office.

The communal spirit of Christian people is not the same as that of Jewish people. However, in my opinion, the spiritual conditions which the rabbi describes as existing in the synagogues and temples are equally applicable to the churches. In different terms, and perhaps from different angles, I discussed some of these same things in my little book, entitled *What's Wrong With Religion?* published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce. . . .

Thanks again for a good article.

KARL B. JUSTUS

The National Conference
of Christians and Jews
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If God does cry, he is weeping now about the chaplain who "gave up his congregation." If it were not so sad, I could be amused at the idea that a rabbi can give up his congregation. Amos and Hosea, they did *not* give up *their* congregations. They went through the byways and the highways and on every soap box cried out what the Lord doth require of thee. . . .

A rabbi who has promised to serve God dare not "give up" his congregation. But perhaps it is for the best. Let all the weaklings quit in good time. Some layman will arise to serve. The rabbis are dedicated to what? This ex-rabbi admits that meat sandwiches drew in the boys. Well, let the rabbis give spiritual meat. Not pap that disgusts thinking people.

ROSE L. BROWN

St. Louis, Missouri

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A Science of Religion

To The Editor of Commentary:

Anyone aspiring to distinguish meticulously between fact and fancy cannot but endorse Professor Goodenough's proposal in his article, "Needed: Scientific Study of Religion," in the March Commentary. The professor correctly notes that the domain of religion is among the domains in which imagination tends to become confused with reality and wishful thinking substituted for scientific procedure. . . .

However, by and large, Dr. Goodenough appears to identify religion with theology. His article takes no cognizance of such factors as sacred music, sacred painting, poetry, sculpture, architecture, drama, or fiction or the activities of religiously motivated persons in the field of social betterment. Dr. Goodenough is not likely to deprecate one's enjoying an oratorio by Handel or a painting by Michelangelo even if one does not wait for a scientific analysis of that oratorio or painting or for an accurate history of music or art or for a precise definition of the psychological processes underlying one's enjoyment; just as Dr. Goodenough would hardly wish people to defer eating until science has ascertained all the facts about nutrition. What if certain activities in the form of prayer, ritual, sacred readings and the like should fall within the category of artistic satisfaction? Would we ask people to forego those satisfactions until they have been scientifically probed?

In brief, Dr. Goodenough's frame of reference is entirely theological. He ignores those reaches of religion which extend beyond the theological. One may reasonably surmise that the more devoted people are to religion in its non-theological phases, the less likely will they be to prove so governed by theological prepossessions as to obstruct scientific scrutiny. . . .

Abraham Cronbach

The Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati, Ohio

To The Editor of Commentary:

As one who has read Commentary from its first issue, I have a feeling that I could not well do without it. Its quality improves.

The article in March issue—"Needed: Scientific Study of Religion"—by Prof. Erwin R. Goodenough, is superb in content and in scholarly objectivity. What an idea! God speed it.

Harry M. Wilson

First Christian Church
Artesia, New Mexico

The Jew as Immigrant

To The Editor of Commentary:

Only today did I finally succeed in getting around to reading Mr. Handlin's excellent article "Our Unknown American Jewish Ancestors" in the February Commentary. . . .

Like all Professor Handlin's work this article is notable for its hard-headed and balanced point of view. A history of American Jews, treated as an immigrant group and not as members of a so-called race or of a particular faith, needs to be written. This is true of all immigrant groups and all religious groups. . . .

Carl Bridenbaugh

Institute of Early
American Culture
Williamsburg, Virginia

To the Editor of Commentary:

Your March issue was excellent. . . . However, Professor Goodenough's article suffers from the old naturalist sin of supposing that we can breed a scientist who is himself above the existential uncertainties and contradictions of life. Who is this "we" that is going to "use" religious truth for the good of the dodos who need it? The reason no such foundation for the study of religious truth exists lies in the very nature of religious truth. Tillich phrases it by saying that every man impinges on the absolutely unknown and unconditioned—every man, that is, has an ultimate concern, and that concern is properly his religion. Without it he could not muster the strength to get out of bed in the morning. That is why the old quarrel and antagonism between science and religion is so fruitless. . . . It is essentially a way of evading specific questions of dogma, the tensions set up by the endless postponement of the Christian and Jewish millennia.

The traditional religions ran out of new ways of keeping hope alive and fresh. . . . So it became fashionable to consider "religion" in the abstract under indictment. The fact is, of course, that the "scientists" are the first to jump to premature religious certainties. . . .

Robert Flint

Cambridge, Massachusetts

A Correction

The poem, "A Letter," by Kalman Heisler, published in the April Commentary, was translated by Hortense Perell and not, as was erroneously stated, by Jacob Sloan.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Prisoner of Democracy

RACE AND NATIONALITY AS FACTORS IN AMERICAN LIFE. By HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD. New York, The Ronald Press, 1947. 216 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by OSCAR HANDLIN

THIS book is obviously meant to be taken seriously. It appears as a volume in the "Humanizing Science Series," edited by a well-known scientist, and it has a distinguished author—fellow of the American Geographical Society and of the Association for the Advancement of Science, president of the American Eugenics Society and of the American Sociological Society, and for twenty-six years Professor of Sociology at New York University. Yet, I must confess, this work seems to me significant only insofar as it demonstrates that a living, sentient human being can keep new thoughts out of his head for thirty-five years.

There is a sort of old-fashioned air about this work, written in the manner of the years before the First World War, years when earnest men wondered whether the Greeks and Poles and Italians and Jews would ever assimilate to American life. Mr. Fairchild wrote books then too, books which are almost identical with the one before us. For this author values consistency; if experience will prove him wrong, why then he will refuse to look at experience.

Here is Mr. Fairchild's thesis. Race and nationality both exist, but they are two different phenomena. Race is a purely biological division of mankind; nationality, a division based on culture. A nation is something else again, but strong nations are homogeneous in race and nationality, and are distinguished by uniformities of language, religion, and customs.

Obviously, the United States then confronts a problem, or rather, two problems, one of race and one of nationality. The latter, involving the Jews, is the simpler. The Jews as a nationality refuse to assimilate because, in the absence of a national homeland, assimilation means loss of group identity. The solution is a Jewish state in Palestine which would relieve American Jews of the care of perpetuation of their nationality and allow them to be digested by the dominant culture. Anti-Semitism would then disappear since it is provoked by the Jews who insist on remaining different and refuse to intermarry with the Gentiles.

The case of the Negroes (the racial problem) is, alas, more difficult. To deport them to Africa would be not nice. Amalgamation might be eugenically unwise. Education does not help much, and laws against discrimination only intensify antipathy. We (the Nordic Americans) should wish them well (only they should not boast about their achievements—and anyway most of the well-known colored people have a saving tincture of white blood).

A conscientious reviewer could, no doubt, subject this argument to sober analysis; on the evidence, however, there seems little hope of converting Mr. Fairchild. For the rest, it will probably be more profitable to point to some of the types of intellectual dishonesty perpetrated in this work, for not the least of victims is the author himself.

Witness the "this is not to say" tactic. Here the writer disarms his opponents by giving all the arguments against his own position, then blandly takes it anyway. For instance, a long discussion leads to the conclusion "that there does not exist as yet any conclusive scientific evidence as to the actual genetic mental equipment of the various racial subdivisions of mankind." But then we go on to learn "it will nevertheless be interesting, and to some extent illuminating, to examine some of the results of the most objective instances of racial mental testing . . . taken at their face value they are significant." Then come the tables, with the Negroes at the bottom, which "show at once a striking inferiority in intelligence of the colored recruits."

Similarly Mr. Fairchild gives all the reasons why it is unlikely that there is a Jewish race, then concludes: "This is not to say, by any means, that there is not probably a heavy racial

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predominance—naturally Semitic—in the total body of Jewry today."

Or, take the maneuver by elegant omission. Back in 1911 Franz Boas made hash of one of Mr. Fairchild's favorite notions, the immutability of physical racial traits. Boas showed that the cephalic index, regarded by anthropologists as one of the most permanent of racial characteristics, changed among the children of immigrants within a single generation. Writing in 1913, Fairchild side-stepped these inconvenient facts with the hope that "they will be subjected to the most careful scrutiny by anthropologists qualified either to verify or correct them." In 1947 he is still side-stepping, only now a slur, characteristically generous, accounts for the failure of anyone to produce the desired verification or correction: "Boas' very eminence and his high standing as a scholar have created a certain reluctance among his colleagues to launch a really destructive attack upon his edifice."

When these means fail, there is always the method of the apt cliché. "*De gustibus non est disputandum* . . . . Once this truth is fully grasped, the whole controversy over race relations takes on a new aspect, clearer, more intelligent, and purer." Not infrequently does Mr. Fairchild call to his aid the dubious exception that proves the fictitious rule.

Nor should we overlook the ingenious analogy. How convincing to make a point by explaining that "the child of a couple of pure Swedish Nordics" raised as "an orphan from birth in the midst of a tribe of African Negroes" would have "fair hair and blue eyes" but "his whole concept of the cosmos would be those of his foster group." Go prove the contrary! I would put into the same category the chain of reasoning by which Fairchild proves the existence of races out of anthropological "evidence" about the way primitive man moved out of the plateau of central Asia.

Finally there is the pose of lofty impartiality. Not for Mr. Fairchild, "mere undiscriminating good-will." He will criticize both the racist (less than one page) *and* the anti-racist (at least twenty-five pages).

The whole is held together by confident assertions, confident because they rest upon an absolute lack of consequential thinking and upon a stolid refusal to regard the world of facts. Here is a logician who defines race in purely biological terms and who then shows that "the notion of race is almost as old as humanity" because all men have in-group feelings. Here is a scholar who has not changed his discussion of assimilation in thirty-five years, all the evidence from the experience of that generation to the contrary notwithstanding. But then was he not also the author, in 1926, of a book called *The Melting Pot Mistake?*

Fortunately, Mr. Fairchild cannot argue away the past by insisting it should not have been so. Nor is he likely to influence a future that is fast running away from the quality of mind he represents; we do seem to be getting laws against discrimination in employment and for more equal educational opportunities.

But one can afford to be a little sorry for him personally. A quarter of a century at New York University (what difficulties for a teacher when Jewish students stay away from class on their peculiar holidays)! So many years to have lived in New York City (where the Irish still persist in parading on St. Patrick's Day and where one is constantly subjected to the "acute irritation" of hearing foreign languages spoken in the streets, to say nothing of "multitudinous varieties of tortured and mutilated English")! No wonder a vein of bitterness runs through this book.

What a fate—to be a life-prisoner of democratic America with less and less hope of parole as the long years go by!

The Progressive Jew as Hero

THE TIME IS NOON. By HIRAM HAYDN. New York, Crown, 1948. 561 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH HARDWICK

THE TIME IS NOON is a weary novel whose earnest mediocrity makes one weak with melancholy. There is a genuine pathos in a book of this sort, something gloomily American and up-to-date in its generous intentions and stingy results. The book is not meant to be acceptable, not designed for mindless comfort; it wants, in its optimistic, endless fashion, to be good, honest, and profound, to say something honorable and significant. But it suffers from much love and little policy, for Haydn has very little to say and yet he has written a very long book.

He has his subject—1929, promising year—but is it really his? No, his claim is not clear and, lest he be accused of presumption, he

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goes easy and rewrites the same old fornications, the dancing daughters who didn't know Daddy was going broke in the crash, the gin and beach parties. There is only one character who is conceived with any creative dash and that is a young boy who goes into the publishing business. The boy's nervous efforts to discover the secret of editorial success, his fear of making a fool of himself, his resentment of his mother's inability to understand that his professional life is delicate and tense—all of this is good, though it is not helped by the addition of a love affair with a publisher's wife who carries on like Theda Bara.

And as if the period itself were not enough of a challenge, Haydn has attempted an extraordinarily impractical thing. He has chosen characters of college age and used, for a large portion of the book, the college scene, that battlefield upon which so many American writers have ignominiously fallen. Haydn is hardly set to take aim here before he is captured by the enemy—those flat, boring, cowardly deans, the folksy trustees (you can't smear the name of Emerson College), the beefy "frat" boys and lean "barbs." No doubt we ought to leave these frightful caricatures to musical comedy where they are used correctly and *intentionally* for farce.

The most serious character in the novel is the hero, Sol Krassovsky, son of Russian-Jewish immigrant parents. Sol gets dismissed from college because of a radical editorial; he goes to New York to be a political journalist. Here we have the usual, snappy Greenwich Village scenes and an account of Sol's introduction to some professional Communists. This, the interpretation of Communism, is the only point in the book at which Haydn takes advantage of his twenty-year removal from the period about which he is writing, but, in my opinion, this is precisely the most unconvincing moment for hindsight. Sol, in 1929, was a born fellow-traveler, if there ever was one, but Haydn has him "see through" the Communists, comprehend that power will corrupt them and rebuke them for their contempt for freedom. No doubt Haydn's desire to make Sol a sentimental hero accounts for the boy's unhistorical cleverness about the future of the Communist party.

I am quite confused in general about the meaning of these progressive Jewish heroes in current popular fiction. They seem to be uneasily resting on the throne left vacant by the deposed miner and worker. Shopping around, these authors find that the middle class has been too immoral to be heroic, the Negro's environment is unfamiliar to most white writers, the Gentile proletariat is not conveniently static in attitude and conflict. That leaves the Jew as the proper object of sentiment and good faith. And, at least as he is usually written about, he is pleasantly easy to bring off. For motivation, past, future, trauma, courage, he needs only his stated Jewishness. It can be assumed that to all decent people his suffering image arouses immediate sympathy. Haydn's hero, Krassovsky, is no more complex than the others. He is pure, honest, brave, and intelligent, and he gets the girl, a curious little creature named Sand. (In passing, it ought to be mentioned, to Haydn's shame, that Krassovsky has one of those outrageous, popular Jewish mothers who writes him affectionately, ". . . then you should grow with your head in the ground like an onion. It is the last time I tell you when you are sure to stop sucking your thumb and asking questions like a schlemiel.")

But there is something sugary in this performance with Sol, indeed some treacly utopianism in all these easy Jewish heroes. Their present success no doubt indicates generous instincts everywhere, but why is it that one invariably feels something forced and unnatural, as though the author and his subject were caught in an unctuous, clammy handshake? The Jew is still the scapegoat. Superficial authors are making him bear more noble actions than any human being can be held accountable for. In fiction, true goodness is seldom honestly come upon except, as Dostoevsky knew, in a kind of "idiot."

And where will this vogue lead? I suspect Sol's bright, soulful face will soon be in the cellar along with the rippling muscles of the strike leader and the aching bones of the Joads.

The Jewish Exile

GALUT. By YITZHAK F. BAER. Translated by Robert Warshow. New York, Schocken Books, 1947. 123 pp. $1.50. (Schocken Library, Number 2.)

Reviewed by MILTON HIMMELFARB

IN THIS little work, only 123 pages long, Fritz Baer, professor in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and perhaps the most eminent contemporary historian of medieval Jewry, discusses the interpretations of the Jewish exile

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advanced by Jews from the Hellenistic age to the French Revolution.

The old chroniclers saw Jewish history as an enduringly edifying narrative of *gesta Dei per Judaeos*—God's exploits by means of the Jews—and their latter-day disciples have continued to preach the same sermon. Professional historians simply brush this sort of thing aside; but when Dr. Baer sees Jewish history as something more than life-size, his colleagues cannot ignore him. It is Professor Baer's undeniable mastery of the scientific method in historical investigation that makes his rejection of a naturalistic philosophy of Jewish history so impressive.

Dr. Baer gives the impression that he intends to suggest incalculably more than he spells out in the scant pages of *Galut*. This effect is created, in part, by the *seriousness* with which he treats his subject—a quality that distinguishes him from most modern historians as sharply as the commentators that really believed in the revelation on Sinai are distinguished from modern Bible critics. But even more than his tone and doctrine, the very nature of Dr. Baer's subject must make the least sensitive reader aware that this small book may be not so much the full text as a table of chapter headings.

Consider only the time dimensions of the Galut problem. The Jewish people came into existence, or began to come into existence, shortly after the time of Hammurabi. They established their First Commonwealth three thousand years ago. Their Second Commonwealth was destroyed two thousand years ago, and then, not long after the Roman Republic became a monarchy, they entered the Galut that has lasted to our day. (There had been others, imposed by the Assyrians and by the Babylonians—not to mention the Egyptian exile.) Jewish history extends over almost two-thirds of recorded human history, and the Galut forms an unbroken bridge between high antiquity and tomorrow morning's news broadcast.

Sheer duration has a heavy weight of meaning. Furthermore, Galut and Christianity are coeval, and Christianity has always had very decided views on the Galut. In most essentials, these were the obverse of the views held by Jews. To Christendom, all Jewry was personified in the legend of the Wandering Jew, who dragged out his weary existence in obedience to Jesus' command: "Tarry thou till I come." In the Christian view, the Jews existed to testify to the historical truths concerning the early history of Christianity, and to suffer their exemplary punishment for rejecting the true Messiah. Until the Second Coming, therefore, the Jews as a people were assured of immortality; at the Second Coming, they would cast off their blindness and accept Christianity.

The Jewish view, essentially, was that the exile of the Jews was a kind of ritual drama, representing the alienation of mankind from God. The return would be accompanied by the turning of all men to their maker, followed by the reign of peace and justice on earth.

The conflict between these two views, the Christian and the Jewish, could hardly be more extreme; but they have in common an element that is perhaps greater than their differences. That is the conviction that the exile was divinely ordained, that it would last until the coming of the Messiah (first or second), and that at least until the Kingdom of God was established on earth (which is as much as to say, for the entire future course of human history) the Jews were necessary to the fulfillment of God's plans for mankind.

In his chapter on Judah Halevi, Dr. Baer writes: "Ultimately, what lifts the poet above the horrors of his time is not only the strength of inner religious liberation, but also a historical vision that sheds light over the events of all times. More clearly, perhaps, than any Jew of later times, Judah understood the opposition between the historical principle of Judaism and the historical principle of the other nations—between the close relationship of the Jews to God, which raised them above all causal laws, and the power politics of the others." Dr. Baer is thus in complete agreement with the medieval poet.

Most of us are empirical and naturalistic in our thinking about human affairs, and we would consequently tend to reject Dr. Baer's vision out of hand. Let us provisionally suspend judgment, however, and examine two interesting corollaries of Baer's historical thinking. We may then be specifically justified in saying that his doctrine is not for us.

The first adjunct of Dr. Baer's basic belief has to do with national genius. He does not elaborate this fully, but it can be reconstructed readily enough from what he says about competing modes of thinking in Jewish history. In brief, he sees truly Jewish thinking as intuitive, visionary, prophetic. Rationalistic thinking is proper to the Greeks and their heirs; it is almost tainted with betrayal in Jews, and the

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Jewish tradition consistently and rightly has withheld popular approval from the systems of its rationalists. At the same time, the visionary quality of truly Jewish thought is disciplined—Baer speaks with approval of Maimonides' insistence on concrete political criteria for recognizing the Messiah.

It cannot be denied that there is good warrant in the Jewish tradition for this view of the genius of a people, in general, and of the extra-rational genius of the Jews, in particular. At least from the book of Daniel to Hasidism, Jews thought that each distinct people had its own distinct genius, personified by an angel (the "prince" of the people in question) in the councils of heaven. This thinking goes very far back in Jewish history, to a time preceding monotheism, when every people was supposed to be under the protection of its own one god. ("Genius" is the word that the Romans used to designate a vaguely divine tutelary spirit.)

Whether Baer's view is in an authentic Jewish tradition or not, however, most of us will not be able to consent to it. In *Jewish Social Studies* for January 1947 Professor Isaiah Sonne of the Hebrew Union College gently reprimanded Dr. Baer for denying the unity of the human spirit. It would be absurd and unjust to make even an implied comparison between Baer and the Nazi doctrinaires, but the Nazi distinction between Aryan and non-Aryan science shows what may be involved in imposing ethnic boundaries on thinking.

THE second corollary of Dr. Baer's thesis can be called historical predestination. It is clear that for him the Galut has lasted because it was destined to last.

A number of Jewish kingdoms have risen and fallen since the days of Titus and Hadrian. The most notable of these was the Khazar state of southern Russia, whose court and aristocracy adopted Judaism during the 8th century. Judah Halevi, in his *Sefer ha-Kuzari,* represented the conversion of the Khazar ruling class as the result of a religious disputation held before the pagan king by representatives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, after which it was obvious to the king that Judaism was the best and truest of the three. We need not doubt either that a religious debate was actually held before the king of the Khazars or that he preferred Judaism on its merits. It will not be impious, however, to suppose that political considerations also played their part. Vernadsky, the Russian historian, suggests that the Khazar rulers, forced by philosophic enlightenment to give up paganism, chose Judaism, rather than Christianity or Islam, in order to preserve their independence of Christian Byzantium and the Islamic Arabs.

Toward the end of the 10th century a similar choice faced the Russians, Christianity now being represented by Roman and Byzantine variants. The Russians finally decided to accept Byzantine Christianity, but it was far from sure that they would choose any form of Christianity at all. They might have followed the Khazar example. If they had, there is little reason to suppose that we would today be discussing a Galut like the one Dr. Baer discusses. Those who believe in a predestined Galut can dismiss this objection by pointing to the fact that the Russians, after all, did not follow the Khazar example—the implication being that it was predestined that they should not. For the rest of us, it was a near miss, emphasizing the element of contingency in history. Dr. Baer would not deny this element in human history as a whole, but he would also say that contingency has no place in the history of the Jews, which is "raised . . . above all causal laws, and the power politics of the others"; what is raised above causality must also be raised above contingency.

And so the argument can continue to run, indefinitely. It cannot be conclusive either on general or on particular grounds. We cannot convince Dr. Baer, and he cannot convince us. There is much grave emotion, much admirable piety toward ancestral ideals, in *Galut.* But we shall continue to insist that the alternative vision — that of a common humanity — gives equal shelter to unique tradition, and that indeed it can base itself on better Jewish doctrine.

Sholom Aleichem and the Emancipated

INSIDE KASRILEVKE. By SHOLOM ALEICHEM. Translated by Isidore Goldstick. New York, Schocken Books, 1948. 127 pp. $1.50. (Schocken Library, Number 11.)

Reviewed by STEPHEN SELEY

THE reviewer must state that he came to Sholom Aleichem feeling himself to be an entirely emancipated Jew (the word "emancipated" is

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used advisedly) and that it was with a severe sense of shock modified by some sorrow, an outraged fastidiousness only slightly alleviated by guilt, that he began to read *Inside Kasrilevke*. Slowly, however, his disgust and despair gave way to a grudging admiration which, in the end, approached the enthusiasm—unreserved, uncritical—of the convert. Still, upon further reflection, this feeling was cruelly dissipated and almost, if not quite, disappeared. For the Jew familiar with—and to—the world that followed the world of Dickens and Balzac cannot bring himself to accept as part of his heritage (however much, when caught, he will prate about his heritage), this world of Sholom Aleichem, which seems to him to be always on the verge of tears.

Following this first rude reaction, the reviewer tried to discipline himself. But it seems that his effort to be impersonal was not altogether sufficient, for he now became quite critical, not of the work in hand but of those "emancipated" Jews who fail to hear the laughter in Sholom Aleichem, who fail to see the beauty in him, and the bravery, who can only hear the incessant geese-like gabbling and ask, "Is *this* what I came from?" and go on to feel something not far removed from rage and revulsion (even when aware of the reasons for the year-round Yiddish Donnybrook) over what is to them the sickening spectacle of the Eastern Jew who, when he leaves, or is driven from, the East, brings to the West the ragged remnants of his sorrows and causes, so much "trouble" for the big and little Rothschilds ("Wasn't it the Polish Jew who caused all this?" they whispered to one another along the Kurfuerstendam in 1933, until, by 1939, a kind of political consciousness had been driven in upon them).

FINALLY, though, the reviewer took up *Inside Kasrilevke* and looked at it for what it is, a well-bound little volume with an attractive yellow dustcover, a *book*, the first half of which, according to the author, is "a guide to strangers" and, as such, in every sense successful, for in seven short sections Sholom Aleichem manages to enlighten the unenlightened traveller, taking him from the railroad station ("it was autumn, early in the morning, before prayer time") to every conceivable station of life in the town. Of course, when you come right down to it, it was *all* one station in life—that of the oppressed minority anywhere. Yet within this constricted orbit there was a life as variegated as the life of Paris or Prague or Petersburg; and as Sholom Aleichem says, "We imitate other peoples in everything . . . they have 'A Guide to Moscow' . . . why shouldn't we get out 'A Guide to Kasrilevke'?"

In one respect, however, the citizens of Karsilevke did *not* imitate the citizens of other communities, for ("it was autumn, early in the morning, before *prayer time*") the life of every Kasrilevken—from old Rabbi Yozifl to the swarthy bandit who, as he robs Sholom Aleichem, says, "We're giving you . . . one minute to say your prayers"—was ruled by the religion of his forefathers, who *lived* for him as they live for us on every page. There is a biblical connotation to almost everything, a biblical flavor to the speech of almost everyone. You feel that the lowliest fishwife is on close terms with the prophets of Israel, with the chroniclers, the kings, and with God himself, who, here, is the Mayor of the Town and, like other mayors, the object of praise and of abuse.

SHOLOM ALEICHEM is renowned for his humor, a humor which, one is told, leans largely on language, on the idiosyncrasies of Yiddish. Therefore it is testimony to the vigor of this humor that so much of it comes through in translation; no further fatalistic flavor, nor more ironic note could, it seems, have been extracted from an infinite variety of situations, from a world in which "love of life" is allied so closely to "survival." This famous Jewish humor. . . . So much of it is a kind of slapstick in reverse, a throwing of pies—not at others, but at oneself. And one is reminded of Shakespeare more than once, as when a troupe of theater folk (in this world it is all a case of "folk") come to town and one of the actors says to another, "M'nashke, put that hump on your back; it'll make you look more like a Jew." At first the "emancipated" Jew fails to see (the non-Jew would probably catch on more quickly) anything funny in this. He can only say to himself, "This is how they think of one another and, thus, the world of them." Then, however, one catches oneself up and recalls these words of Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch."

INSIDE KASRILEVKE gives the reader but a glimpse of this world-within-a-world which

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Sholom Aleichem created. Joy mutated by sadness, sadness by joy, and this humor which, in its passionately dispassionate acceptance and fatalistic appraisal of adversity, approaches the heroic, is so effectively, tenderly, ingratiatingly, brought home to one that, disarmed, one tends to excuse a frequent structural clumsiness that cannot be attributed to inept translation. A magnificent Dostoevskyan dreariness, a universal desolation brightened by highly colored strokes of wit, is at times so wholly attained that one also tends to forgive an overworked capacity to observe. There is no lack here—there is almost too much—of what is currently called "authenticity"—and there *can* be too much, when too much wrecks a style not infrequently distinguished, as is Sholom Aleichem's, for precision, for vivid yet spare beauty. At one point in this book the busy bustling sweating author says, "It's impossible to put it all down on paper." Nevertheless one has the feeling that it *was* possible and that it *was* put down. *All of it.* Which, to understate the case, would be commendable were it not for the fact that, in Sholom Aleichem, one's feeling of fullness is too often tinged with the discomfort that accompanies any kind of excess.

God and Man

BETWEEN MAN AND MAN. By MARTIN BUBER. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith. New York, Macmillan, 1948. 309 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH H. GUMBINER

THE five essays comprising *Between Man and Man* were written during the decade 1929-1939. Here we have a needed clarification for English readers of the ideas first set forth in the author's *I and Thou.*

Two names stand out in the development of the modern "philosophy of existence": Kierkegaard for the Christian approach, Heidegger for the secular. In the essays under discussion Martin Buber gives us a Jewish approach to *Existenzphilosophie* which avoids the Christian tendency to diminish man in the perspective of God's love, and the secular inclination to remove God as a possible goal of man's love. Kierkegaard's individual stands in an absolute relation with God only after renouncing the world of men with its ethical imperatives; Heidegger's individual ends by contemplating his own self in a kind of spiritual mirror from which the images of other men are only fleetingly reflected and the presence of God not at all. For Buber the love of God includes the love of man, and the religious individual stands in full I-Thou relationship to both.

The first of these essays, "Dialogue," clarifies the dialogical principle presented in *I and Thou.* There are three kinds of communication in life: (1) monologue disguised as dialogue, which occurs when two or more men meet in space and speak apparently to each other, but in reality each to himself; (2) technical dialogue, whose purpose is to increase objective understanding; (3) finally, there is genuine dialogue, whether spoken or silent. In this, each has in mind the other in his present and particular being. The true dialogical relationship, where two subjects confront each other as I and Thou, is the fruit of *community,* not of *collectives.* Concerning the latter Buber writes: "Bundled together, men march without *Thou* and without *I,* those of the left who want to abolish memory, and those of the right who want to regulate it: hostile and separated hosts, they march into the common abyss."

IN "The Question to the Single One," Buber deals with a category of basic import in the thought of Kierkegaard. The Single One means concrete singularity, perfect subjectivity, the opposite of the crowd. For Kierkegaard it is the category through which "from the religious standpoint, time and history and the race must pass." Kierkegaard's renunciation of his fiancée, Regina Olsen, was his way of removing the object of human love so as to free himself to love God. This act parallels his interpretation of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac as an abandonment of the universal ethical, in order to enter an absolute relationship with God.

To this, Buber retorts: "That is sublimely to misunderstand God. . . . God wants us to come to him by means of the Reginas he has created and not by renunciation of them." It is the great service of Buber to have reminded us that in Jewish thought the love of God is not construed as exclusive but as inclusive of love of God's creatures, that God does not demand that we choose between Him and his creation. And when the Christian objects that the world as we know it is a fallen world, Buber simply

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asks: "But what fall of the world could be so mighty that it could *for him* break it away from being his creation?"

Following two essays that apply the dialogical principle to education, the final essay entitled "What Is Man?" is a brilliant attempt to answer Kant's "fourth question" by evaluating philosophical anthropology from Aristotle through contemporary Existentialists.

Here, Buber continues the task begun by Edmund Husserl during the first decade after the First World War, namely, to understand what man is and how to organize human life so as to permit man the free exercise of his unique capacities.

Buber denies both the isolated individual, and the collective, which he holds is the last barrier raised by man against a true confronting of himself. For him, the significant fact about human existence is "man with man." In this sense life is an existence-communication. Man confronts the world, his fellow man, and God in an I-Thou relationship. That is what is unique about man. And in confronting God he also confronts and accepts men, for the love of God is inclusive of his creation.

IT HAS seemed to me for some time past that when Existentialist thought is Christian, as with Kierkegaard, it culminates in extreme other-worldliness; and when atheistic as with Heidegger, it leaves man with only solicitude and self-consciousness. Buber's thought, as expanded in this volume of essays, is the needed corrective. It starts from the existence of concrete man and finds the meaning of life in a responsive relationship with God which includes the world and one's fellow men. Thus the wholeness of life is restored and the ethical finds its place within the religious.

It is unfortunate that these essays are presented in an uneven and sometimes awkward and difficult translation. True, the translator invited the reader's "complaisance . . . as it was decided better to make the English a little odd rather than customary and misleading." The only criticism of this procedure is that it has been somewhat over-done.

BOOK REVIEWS IN THIS ISSUE

OSCAR HANDLIN is assistant professor of social sciences and a member of the department of history and social relations at Harvard.

ELIZABETH HARDWICK is the author of *The Ghostly Lover,* a novel, and has just been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

MILTON HIMMELFARB is with the foreign affairs staff of the American Jewish Committee.

STEPHEN SELEY has published one novel, *The Cradle Will Fall,* and has just completed his second novel, tentatively entitled *Baxter Bernstein: A Hero of Sorts.*

JOSEPH H. GUMBINER wrote the article "Existentialism and Father Abraham," published in the February COMMENTARY. He is currently acting as rabbi of the new congregation Beth Hillel in the San Fernando Valley.

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